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The Dialogue on Miracles

Volume I

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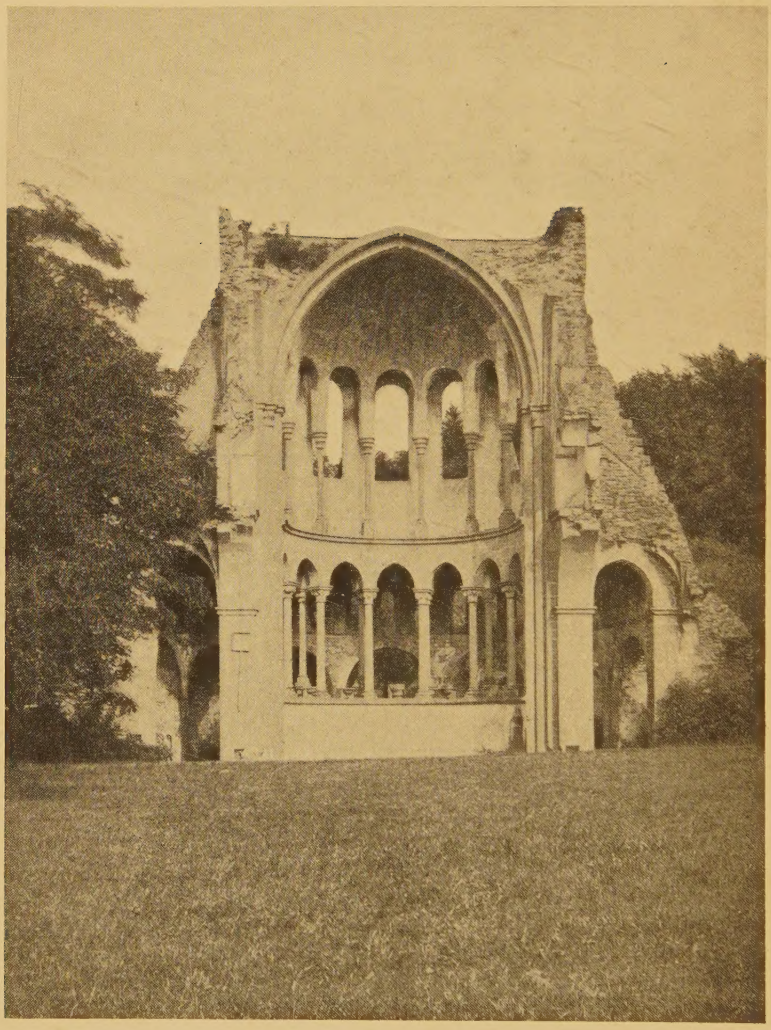

THE APSE OF HEISTERBACH

The Dialogue on Miracles

CAESARIUS OF
HEISTERBACH
(1220 - 1235)

Vol. I

Translated by H. VON E. SCOTT and C. C. SWINTON BLAND
with an Introduction by G. G. COULTON

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INTRODUCTION

Picturesque monastic ruins are less frequent in Germany than in Great Britain. At the Reformation, princes sometimes did what should have been done with us; they converted the dissolved abbeys into schools, colleges or hospitals. Thus the Cistercian monastery of Maulbronn in Würtemberg has remained in a wonderful state of preservation; it was made, like the neighbouring abbey of Blaubeuren, into a Protestant theological seminary; and thus it presents not a ruin, but probably the completest specimen of a medieval Cistercian house in Europe. Other dispossessed houses seem to have been pulled down more remorsely than with us; but almost as much medieval work has been destroyed, in those districts which clung to the Roman obedience, by the monks themselves. In Germany as in other countries, they rebuilt whenever they could find the money; so that great monasteries like Admont in Austria, Dissentis and St. Gall in Switzerland, show less medieval masonry than the average English ruin.

Heisterbach is here a fortunate exception; its ruined apse, beautiful in itself, is set in happy surroundings. Lying amidst the most picturesque and therefore the most familiar of Rhineland scenes, it is yet sufficiently secluded to escape the commonplace tourist; and even Germans, until recently, have honoured it with little notice. Yet the associations of this abbey, as readers of the present translation may discover, are if possible more interesting than the ruin or the valley, and may rival even those which cling round "the castled crag of Drachenfels."

The foundation and early years of Heisterbach Abbey are told by Cæsarius, but in fragmentary sketches and allusions

which may be supplemented here. Like many other Cistercian houses, our own Fountains included, it began on a scale of asceticism and independence of natural conditions which proved too much for human endurance, and was exchanged for more reasonable self-denial.

One of the famous Seven Mountains by Königswinter on the Rhine is now called Stromberg, but was also named Petersberg, from a chapel which stood on its wooded crest. Very likely this was a converted pagan temple, just as Godesberg, to which it looks across the Rhine, was originally Wudinsberg,"the Mount of Woden." All round stood castles, still to be seen in their ruins, built by warlike prince-bishops of Cologne; Drachenfels, Wolkenburg, Rolandseck, and presently, as we shall see, Godesberg. These mountains had still earlier warlike traditions; battles that had been woven into the medieval epic of Theodoric the Goth, or " Dietrich von Bern." The highest of them, the Auelberg, had in earlier ages been the tribal folkmoot-place; thus the whole group had commanded attention from time immemorial. The chapel on Petersberg was occupied in 1134 by a Knight named Walter, who " had escaped, naked, from the shipwreck of the world," and had gathered a small group of like-minded penitents, with whom he formed a community which lived under the rule attributed to St. Augustine. Innocent II and Celestine II granted the convent formal letters of protection; but the brethren found it a hard struggle for existence on this upland, where the only free soil was what they could clear for themselves. At the death of their founder Walter, they moved down into the fertile Sulzthal, and formed a new convent at Reussrath.

Archbishop Philip of Cologne (1167-91) found fresh inhabitants for this deserted Petersberg. The Cistercian reform was then in full force; hence the Archbishop drew, (in his own words) " water from that stream wherein it flowed most pure." He raised a small band of Cistercians from the convent of Himmerode in the Eifel district, who were willing

to fight against inclement climate, niggardly soil, and the devils who were known always to resent monastic enroachment upon their ancient solitary reign. The new foundation had its difficulties, external as well as internal. The Archbishop (writes Cæsarius, Book IV, ch. 64) " was rebuked by certain men of the province who feared for their heirs." In his *Homilies* (Vol. II, p. 15) Cæsarius puts it more explicitly still; " such a disturbance was aroused in the province, not only by knights and villagers, but even by the Count himself," that the beneficent prelate found himself confronted with a storm. " But he answered a good word, a holy word, saying : ' Would that there were in each village of my diocese a convent of just folk, who would praise God without ceasing and pray both for me and for those who are committed to my care! Methinks my Church would then be in a far better state than now; for they would profit many men and harm none. They take not other folk's goods, but share their own with all men." This claim, at that early stage of Cistercian life, was substantially true, and the opposition was disarmed when the Archbishop took legal guarantees from the monks against undue enroachments. Twelve monks and an abbot—the number which had been traditional all through the Benedictine centuries for a complete " convent "—set forth from Himmerode in April 1188-9 (Bk. VIII ch. 91). " As their barge was borne down the Rhine, (according to the witness of all who still survive) they saw in the heaven above them a circle of light, wherein were seven suns . . . . by which circle I understand the eternity of the Holy Spirit; and, by the seven suns, His sevenfold gifts, wherewith the province was to be illuminated by the good example of this monastery." But this convent on the Petersberg lasted not even so long as under the Augustians. The Cistercians, in their turn, found the climate and soil too unfavourable; moreover, Cistercian tradition was always to settle monasteries not in cities or on hills, but in wooded valleys, often near the head-waters of the stream. In 1192, therefore, they left for Petersberg and

setttled in the dale at its foot, at a spot called Heiſterbach, or Beech-beck. Here, in course of time, they verified both the Archbishop's predictions and those of his critics. They settled first in mere farm buildings which Philip granted them, to which they added a wooden chapel. But they rapidly grew in fame of sanctity, and therefore in wealth: Cæsarius points the moral in a tale beloved of Luther and of Browning, *Date* and *Dabitur,* (Bk. IV. c.c. 68, 70). On the one hand, during the terrible famine of 1197, the abbot slaughtered an ox for the poor on every day except faſtdays, and fifteen hundred are said to have been kept from ſtarvation during the worſt days; on the other, their charity was rewarded a hundredfold even in this life, (IV. 65). They were soon great landowners not only in their own valley but as far off as Bonn, Cologne, Mühlheim and the Weſterwald. Cæsarius tell us how the mighty Innocent III himself would have taxed these Ciſtercian possessions, like other Church property, for the Crusade of 1204; but the General chapter prayed so vehemently to the Virgin Mary, and she sent so threatening a message to the Pontiff, that he feared and repented, (VII 6; cf. 7.) Before Cæsarius was dead, the Order which had begun in such poverty and self-denial was already earning a reputation for rapacity. But his book, like the *Exordium Magnum Ciſterciense* of his contemporary Conrad von Eberbach, tells mainly of the palmy days of the Order; and for that we are most grateful to him.

In his lifetime, and moſtly under his own eyes, the monaſtery was born and grew up to its full ſtrength if not to its greateſt wealth. He saw it ſtruggle through the years of terror when two princes were fighting for the Empire, and two churchmen for the Archbishopric of Cologne, while both wars surged backwards and forwards over the crops and homeſteads of the Rhineland peasants. He saw the foundation of the great abbey church in 1202, its dedication in 1227, and probably some further years of continuous leisurely building, as the

funds dribbled in, until all was completed to the very western portal. The choir was frankly Romanesque in style; the west end, as Boisserée's drawing shows, had pointed arches in the newer Gothic style. This church was one of a notable group in the Rhine district; it may be compared with the roughly contemporary buildings of the Apostelkirche at Cologne, St. Castor at Coblenz, Limburg Cathedral, or the churches of Sinzig and Andernach. All of these are more or less influenced by the Burgundian style which reached such simple quiet perfection in the best Cistercian churches, where that puritanism which was one of the fundamental principles of the Order imposed severe artistic restraints, yet left plenty of room for individual expression. The large marjority of Cistercian churches have a plain square east end; but Heisterbach, like Pontigny and a few others, ends in a semi-circle with a cluster of chapels. There is a very definite reason for the simultaneous erection of so many churches in Rhineland; in the civil wars of 1198-1208 Coblenz, Andernach, Sinzig, Remagen and Bonn were all burned, and the sanctuaries were rebuilt as soon as money could be found. In excuse for Cæsarius's conviction that it was impious in Innocent III to dream of taxing Heisterbach for the Crusade of 1204, let us remember that the monks were then spending heavily on the choir which, in its ruin, is one of the most picturesque in Germany.

Heisterbach, in later days, seems to have lapsed into the uneventful and undistinguished mediocrity of most monasteries, even in the Cistercian Order. No such distinguished inmates are recorded, whether monks or guests, as those of whom Cæsarius tells us.[1] Scarcely a generation after our author's death, the abbey fell into a gulf of debt—*debita infinita*—and the abbot was deposed (1285). The budget was balanced by expedients common enough at the time, but dubious in their effects—a yearly fair, repeated grants of indulgences for pilgrims,

[1] See index under Theodoric of Wied, Ludwig of Are, Christian of Bonn, Conrad of Thüringen, Cæsarius of Prüm, Nicholas the Archpoet.

and (what had been most strictly forbidden in earlier Cistercian days) permission for women to worship in, and bring their offerings to the alms-boxes of, the abbey church (1309-1317). In the next century came a reforming abbot (Christian II. d. 1448), The religious wars brought distress again; the abbey was burned in 1588, and plundered in 1688-9 and 1703. It was dissolved in consequence of the French Revolution (1803) and sold in 1810 to be broken up for building materials; fortunately the enthusiastic antiquary Sulpiz Boisserée drew the church while it was only half demolished.

Of Cæsarius himself we know little beyond what he tells us casually on his way from one tale to another. He was probably born at Cologne; certainly he knew the city well in early life. The Rhine in history has been perhaps the greatest of all trade routes; and in 1200 it was at its best. The surviving gates and fragments of town wall at Cologne seem gigantic when compared with even York or Chester in England; moreover, here and there, even villages were better fortified than our English towns; for the feudal lords were as ubiquitous and predatory as the workers were busy and rich. The great stone house which story connects with the name of Overstolz, in the Rheingasse at Cologne, but which perhaps belonged to the Templars, still survives amid many clearances and changes around, and is as sound and habitable now as it was seven centuries ago. Cologne painters are praised in contemporary poetry, and the goldsmiths were unsurpassed. "The picture drawn by Rudolf von Ems in his well-known poem *Der Gute Gerhard* shows, even at that date, a refined man of the world, with courtly culture, who can move as freely among bishops and princes as among his own fellows, the burghers and merchants. With all his modesty he yet speaks of 'the dignity that all men should have who busy themselves with commerce,' and thinks that even a princess may fare worse than to find herself *ein reiches Kaufweib* by marriage with a merchant's son."[1] In other epics, by poets who knew Cologne

[1] Kaufmann, pp. 18, 19.

only from world-report, the city is represented as an abode of counts and princesses, and a scene of constant chivalric exploits. Knights of Cologne distinguished themselves in sober history, as crusaders and as combatants in the wars between Pope and Emperor. Never was all this truer than in Cæsarius's own day. He lived to see, or hear of as local news, King John of Jerusalem coming to visit archbishop Engelbert and humbled like the Queen of Sheba by what he saw; still more magnificent was the visit of the Emperor Frederick II with his new English bride in 1235. Cæsarius may just have lived to see the first stone laid, in 1248, of the present Cathedral choir. He was at Heisterbach when the Emperor Otto sought refuge in Cologne after his defeat at Bouvines, and finally slunk out almost as his rival Frederick marched in by the opposite gate, and presently guttered out in obscurity like a spent candle.

The rapid increase of wealth quickened every form of city life; here, as in the great cities of Italy, trade and war, culture and riot went hand in hand. Cæsarius, who must have been born in about 1180, which would make him an almost exact contemporary of St. Francis, would see much the same contrasts of luxury and poverty which the Saint of Assisi saw, on an exaggerated scale. He tells us incidentally of minstrelsy and wine (VI. 7); from other sources we hear of the great Whitsuntide dances at Cologne. Cæsarius, in his boyhood, had " often " seen a drunken youth running naked through the streets (IV. 6); gamblers, again, would play away their last shreds of clothing, and hang themselves in despair (IV. 44); even at a solemn funeral service, some of the scholars would be dicing or pulling each other's hair while the rest chanted the requiem (I. 32). The clergy, though comparing favourably with neighbouring Bonn, and displaying more than one Parson Adams, contained a disconcerting variety of Trullibers, of whom the most picturesque, perhaps was Bertolph surnamed " Guzzle-bacon " (Vorator Lardi, IX, 59), or perhaps the Abbess of the Eleven Thousand Virgins,

revelling down the ſtreet with her attendants and preceded by clerics wrapped in nun's mantles (VI. 5). Cæsarius, fortunately for himself and for us, was not dependent as a boy upon clerics of this latter kind. His maſters were two of the beſt men whom he describes in his whole book, Rudolf and Ensfrid.[1] The former was "Scholaſticus," or Maſter of the Cathedral School; he had been a lecturer at Paris and was a man of real learning and upright life. Ensfrid had begun as Rector of Siegburg and ended as Dean of the collegiate church of St. Andreas, which ſtands near the weſt end of the Cathedral, and forms a moſt picturesque boundary to the garden of the present "Ewige Lampe" hotel. That side is of later Gothic work; but a great part of the church is ſtill as Cæsarius saw it; where he sat as a schoolboy, children ſtill sit for their catechism. Ensfrid had many virtues, and it was not the leaſt of them that he differed from moſt medieval pedagogues as to the value of severe corporal punishment. Our hero was ſtill in his schooldays when he caught a fever and came near to death. The cure prescribed, on religious grounds, fortunately coincided with what a modern hydrotherapiſt would choose for medical reasons; and he was miraculously healed (X 44). Miracles and visions were of common occurrence in the city; here was "das grosse, heilige Köln," which was said to count as many churches and chapels as there are days in the year; and Cæsarius, while his intellect expanded under Rudolf, was in sympathy with the myſticism of Ensfrid. Moreover, this was evidently a brittle world. He heard Henry, Cardinal Bishop of Albano, preach in Cologne a crusade againſt Saladin, who had juſt taken Jerusalem; then, in 1188, came this third crusade, with its miserable failure and the ſtartling death of the great Emperor Frederick I; then came the diſaſtrous civil wars; all these things, with other sufferings that came more nearly home to the common people, sank into our author's soul. He writes: "In our days there would seem to be a fulfilment of what the Lord saith in the

[1] The relevant passages may be found in I. 32,; IV. 26; I. 38; IX. 22; VI. 5.

gospel: 'nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven'" (X 47). It was not a comfortable world, even in "the great and holy Cologne"; and at last he resolved to give it the go-by. "In the days when King Philip made his first campaign of ravage in the diocese of Cologne, it chanced that I journeyed from Walberberg to Cologne with abbot Gevard" of Heisterbach, the man who, only a year before, had dealt so mercifully with the starving poor. "On that journey he exhorted me most earnestly to conversion,[1] yet with no effect, until he told me that story of the angel-reapers at Clairvaux," which will be found in its due place (I 17). Cæsarius delayed only three months, to perform a pilgrimage he had vowed to Rocamadour; and then, without the knowledge of his friends, he slipped off and entered as a novice at Heisterbach, in the last weeks of 1198 or the first of 1199. As fellow-novice he had a far more aged friend, Gottfried the "scholasticus" of St. Andreas, who had been tutor to Archbishop Philip of Cologne. The old man found Cistercian life very hard, and almost gave in; Cæsarius comforted him, encouraged him to open the Bible and pitch upon a verse for his guidance; and this brought him safely through (IV 49, 94). There and elsewhere he shows very clearly how much courage and perseverance went to the making of a true Cistercian in those early days.

Cæsarius became in due course Master of the Novices and Prior of Heisterbach, apparently reaching the latter dignity in 1220. As Prior, he was constantly the Abbot's companion on rounds of visitation; we find him near Aachen, at Burtscheid, at Stuben on the Moselle, at Hadamar and finally at Eberbach, where Conrad was finishing, or had recently

[1] *Conversio*, in medieval Latin, almost always means the adoption of monastic vows. This conversion of Cæsarius may be compared with that of his younger contemporary, the Franciscan Salimbene of Parma, which I have translated in Chapter IV of *From St. Francis to Dante.*

completed, his *Exordium Magnum Cisterciense,* a book almost as precious for its scenes of monastic life as that of Cæsarius. He was also at Gröningen, and in 1233 at Marburg, swarming with pilgrims for the recent canonization of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. By this time his literary reputation was assured. His own Abbot, the Abbot of Himmerode, and the Archbishop of Cologne all pressed him to finish this present *Dialogue* and his closely-related book of *Homilies,* with the Lives of the martyred Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne and of St. Elizabeth. He was recognized on all sides as one of the profoundest theologians and casuists of the Rhineland, and consulted accordingly. Men got hold of his unfinished manuscripts and copied them without his leave. He must have died somewhere between 1240 and 1250, or perhaps a little later. Nearly a hundred manuscripts of his different works have survived even to the present day; and one of the Dialogue, dating almost from his lifetime, was probably written in the very Abbey of Heisterbach. This *Dialogue,* so exactly suited for the instruction of early 13th century novices, kept its popularity in the cloister for a very long time. It was still read publicly in Cistercian houses on the verge of the Reformation; and it was quoted by the biographer of Johann Wessel, as an instance of his hero's independence of judgment, that he found it too legendary for true edification: "It would be better to have theology and the devotions of Bernard presented before the Brethren; for this contains not only absurdity, but much that is dangerous."[1]

In Wessel's age, with its intellectual and spiritual awakening, this criticism was already justified; and, from the strictly modern points of view, it might be put even more strongly. European society was not ripe for the Reformation in 1230 as it was in 1480; and many of the things which displeased an advanced thinker like Wessel had, in earlier days, been commonplaces not only of ordinary, but also of what passed

[1] E. W. Miller and J. W. Scudder, *Wessel Gansfort* (Putnams, N.Y., 1917), vol. II., p. 342, from A. Hardenberg's almost contemporary life of Wessel, who died in 1489.

for higher theology. Cæsarius's eschatology, for instance, is to us extraordinarily crude. Yet, in his day, there was probably no single exception among orthodox writers to the creed expounded by so balanced a philosopher and theologian as St. Thomas Aquinas—that the large majority of mankind will find their way to inconceivable torture in hell, and that the small minority of saved, looking down from heaven upon these torments, will rejoice in God's justice as manifested therein. Bearing this in mind, we shall see how truly Cæsarius mirrors his own times.

For his whole book is essentially truthful, even where we condemn its facts as untrue; the things may not always be *vera* in detail, but the author is uniformly *verax*. Where he knows a story only by hearsay, he tells us so, as in the famous reply attributed to the Legate at Béziers: "Kill, Kill! God will know his own!" His anecdotes are mainly local, drawn from his own experience or those of his immediate friends; but a good many are of far wider historical significance; his interest for us springs from his own lively interest in so many different things; to him we may truly apply what Dryden said of Chaucer: "Here is God's plenty." Moreover, wherever he can be checked by contemporary documents, he has never, I believe, been convicted of more than the ordinary small lapses of memory into which we fall in recalling distant years.

In 1851, J. Strange published an excellent edition of the *Dialogue* in two volumes; for the *Homilies* we must still go to the unprocurable edition of Coppenstein (1615). There is an excellent brief study of Cæsarius and his writings by A. Kaufmann (Cologne 1850) to which I am much indebted: it is now out of print. A well-illustrated monograph on the abbey buildings has recently been published by E. Beitz (Augsburg, Benno Filsen, 2 Mk.) With regard to translation, I believe that the present version here published is the first to appear in any language, often as the public desire for some such vulgarization has been expressed.

A word must be added concerning the translators, both of whom I am happy to count among my fellow-collegians and friends. The Reverend H. v. E. Scott, though mainly a mathematician, had always a natural and very real love for the classics, which grew rather than withered under the daily drudgery of reading them with pupils not always very advanced or interested. Among those pupils was Laurence Oates, the " gallant English gentleman " of the South Pole Expedition, whose character, like that of many others, owed very much to a tutor distinguished in nearly all branches of athletics, intensely sociable and generous by nature, transparently honest, and straightforward even to bluntness. After nearly thirty years of strenuous tutorial work, Scott undertook the largest, and far from best-paid, of all the parishes in Chichester diocese. His parishioners soon found out that he denied nobody, even at the times that he most needed rest; and I seldom saw him eat an entirely uninterrupted meal in those days. During the War, when his brother sent him food from Canada, he shared it with his people. The work broke him down in 1921; after many warnings from his own doctor, he consulted a London specialist, who found serious heart-trouble, and told him plainly that he must resign his living or die within a few weeks. When once he had settled down into enforced retirement, he began upon the translation of Cæsarius, which had long been planned. Scarcely a day passed without two or three fresh pages, until a sudden paralytic stroke in December, 1922. Even then he pressed on first with his own hand, and then, after a second stroke, by the devotion of his wife, to whom he dictated until the days came when his words became no longer intelligible; and thus this last labour of an exceptionally laborious life was perforce broken off.

After his death, I was fortunate enough to enlist Mr. C. C. Swinton Bland, late Headmaster of Ripon School, whose familiarity with classical Latin has now emboldened him to make more than one venture into the Middle Ages.

Mr. Bland is responsible for about one-third of the translation, the index, and a great deal of hard work in proof-reading and general revision. I cannot answer in detail for two volumes which time will not permit me to revise; but of one thing I am sure, that the reader will here find, on the whole, from the two translators, as true a picture of Cæsarius as Cæsarius has given us of his own times. Classical scholars, face to face with medieval Latin, may easily trip here and there over a technical phrase; indeed, many slips of that kind may be found even in works written by professed medievalists, and published under the ægis of learned societies. But to this present translation, as to the original book, we may confidently apply Montaigne's words: "C'eſt icy un livre de bonne foy, lecteur."

G. G. COULTON.

PROLOGUE.

" Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be loſt."

It has been my duty, in my responsible post,[1] to rehearse to the novices some of those miracles that have been wrought within our Order in our own times, and are ſtill of daily occurrence; and I have been asked with much inſiſtence by many to perpetuate them in writing. For they said that it would be an irrevocable loss if those accounts should fall into oblivion, which might serve for the edification of poſterity. Although I felt myself unfitted to do this, both because of my scanty knowledge of the Latin tongue and my fear of the detractions of the envious, yet the commands of my abbot were laid upon me, together with the advice of the abbot of Marienſtatt, and these it was impossible to gainsay. Mindful also of the saying of the Saviour, which I have quoted, while others are breaking whole loaves to the people, that is, are expounding hard problems of Scripture, or writing down the more important occurrences of modern days, I have collected the crumbs that fell and have filled twelve baskets with them for those who are poor, not in grace, but in learning. For under that number of heads I have divided the whole work. The firſt book treats of conversion, the second of contrition, the third of confession, the fourth of temptation, the fifth of demons, the sixth of the virtue of simplicity, the seventh of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the eighth of various visions, the ninth of the sacrament of the body and blood of Chriſt, the tenth of miracles, the eleventh of the dying, and the twelfth of the pains and glories of the dead.

Now that I might arrange my examples the more effectively, I have introduced, in the manner of a dialogue, two persons, to wit, a novice who asks queſtions, and a monk who

[1] As maſter of the novices.

gives the answers; because, when the name of the author is withheld, the tongue of the detractor finds nothing to feed upon; nevertheless, if any desire to know his name let him put together the initial letters of the twelve books.[1]

I have also inserted accounts of a great number of events that took place outside the Order, because they were edifying, and were, like all the rest related to me by religious men. God is my witness that I have not fashioned from imagination one single chapter in this dialogue; moreover, if any of the details happened otherwise than I have set them down, the responsibility must lie on those who narrated them to me. And because this dialogue contains so many miracles, I have called it the Dialogue of Miracles.

My reasons for so arranging the books are these: Because a man can be converted on the outside, without contrition, the first book discusses conversion. Because conversion is useless without contrition in the sinner, contrition holds the second place. Also because contrition of itself is barren, unless it be followed by oral confession, the discussion of confession follows next. Further, since confession is rarely enough to wipe out the penalty due to sin, the question of satisfaction will fitly succeed, and I have shown this to be temptation (iv. 1). Again, because demons are the authors or instigators of temptation, there follows the book that treats of them. Also, because simplicity of heart is the best antidote to temptation, the treatment of simplicity succeeds that of the demons. These six parts refer to merits, the remaining six to rewards. Moreover, the science of numbers requires that they should be so arranged. For as unity is the base of all numbers, so is conversion the starting point of all righteousness. The second place is befitting to contrition, which is twofold, expressing itself in grief of mind and pain of body. The third place for confesson, for it is threefold (cf. iii. 1), the confession of praise, of faith, and of guilt. Temptation holds the fourth place, because there are four who tempt us: God, the devil, the world and the flesh. The fifth place is suitable for the devil, because five is the apostate number. The sixth for simplicity, for six is the number of perfection, and simplicity

[1] They formed the words: CESARII MVNVS.

is that which makes " the whole body full of light " (Matt. vi. 22). But the reasons for such positions, both of these first six and of the others following, are more fully shown at the beginning of each book. And because by the blessing of Christ, the collected fragments are so multiplied that they may be compared with whole loaves in quantity, I have divided them into two volumes, as the twelve loaves of the shewbread were set in two rows (Lev. xxiv. 6), six books being placed in one and six in the other.

PLATE II

Incipit distinctio · iij· de confessione·
capitulum· primum· ~ ~ ~

ine desiderio cō
fessionis quia in
fructuosa est om
nis contricio·
uidere debemus
quid sit confes
sio ·² qualis ee debeat· que sit eius
uirtus ·⁷ quis fructus ·Nomina

AN EARLY MS. OF CÆSARIUS (Dist. III, c. 1

[face p. 4

THE DIALOGUE ON MIRACLES

BOOK I

OF CONVERSION

CHAPTER I.

Of the institution of the Cistercian Order.

I desire to speak of conversion[1], and therefore I invoke the aid of Him, *who speaketh peace to His people and to His saints* (Ps. lxxxv, 8), and to those who are converted at the heart. He it is who inspireth what should be written, who guideth the pen, who bestoweth the rewards of toil. From Him cometh the conversion to salvation, because His mercy turneth away His wrath from those His power hath converted.

Novice.—Before beginning your discourse upon conversion, will you please tell me where, and by whom, and under what pressure our Order was founded, so that having thus laid the foundation you may build the spiritual walls upon it with those living, polished and precious stones that have been vouchsafed to the earth?

Monk.—In the diocese of Langres[2] there is a monastery called Molesme, well known to fame, conspicuous in religion, ennobled by illustrious sons, of ample possessions and no less rich in virtue. And because there can be no lasting companionship for wealth and virtue, some of its members, truly wise and lovers of virtue, with a clear perception of higher things considered that though they were living honourably enough in this monastery, yet the rule was far less strict than that to which they had vowed themselves. They therefore, a little band of twenty-one monks, with the abbot Robert,

[1] Conversion does indeed signify complete change of heart, and is used with that meaning by Cesarius, but his general use of the word, as in the case of all later medieval writers, is in the sense of profession or taking the monastic vows.

[2] According to another MS., Lyons.

consulted together, and with one consent set out for a waſte and solitary wilderness called Citeaux, determined there to support themselves by the work of their own hands, as enjoined by the rule.

And so, in the year of Our Lord's Incarnation, 1098, upheld by the advice and support of the venerable Hugo, Bishop of Lyons, and at that time legate of the papal see, and of the pious Walter, Bishop of Châlons, and also of the illuſtrious Prince Odo, Duke of Burgundy, they began to build an abbey in this place. And because the monaſtery from which they had gone out had been built in honour of Mary, the Blessed Mother of God, both they and their successors who came forth from this monaſtery determined that all their churches should be dedicated to the honour of the same glorious Virgin. Not long afterwards, by the command of Urban II and with the consent of Walter of Châlons, because the monks of Molesme called urgently for the return of their abbot, Robert went back to them and Alberic, a pious and holy man, was chosen to fill his place; and by his diligence, the grace of God working with him, that Valley grew no little in repute, and all things needful were added to them.

On the death of Alberic, Stephen, a man of equal sanctity and an Englishman, succeeded. Hitherto they had been but few in number, because layfolk shrank from their auſterity, though reverencing them for their holiness of life: but now in their fifteenth year, they were joined by S. Bernard with about thirty companions who came thither to bow their necks beneath the gentle yoke of Chriſt. From this time forward that vine of the Lord of Sabaoth began to grow and expand and to extend its branches from sea to sea till the earth was filled with the fullness of it. La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, Morimond were its firſt offshoots, whose abbots became of so great importance that together they make a visitation to their father the abbot of Citeaux, and are in turn visited by him one by one.

Novice.—What is a visitation?

Monk.—A visitation is a means of preserving discipline. The early fathers inſtituted two methods for the correction of faults and the promotion of charity, to wit, the General

Chapter and the early visitation of the monasteries. Then in the year of our Lord 1115 was founded the house of Clairvaux, whose first abbot was Bernard, and in the year 1134, that of Hemmenrode; then in 1188, on the 17th of March, our convent, with its abbot Herman, went forth from Hemmenrode and on the 22nd of the same month came to the mountain of Stromberg. Four years afterwards it went down into the valley of Petersthal.[1]

Novice.—From what I have heard, the Order of the Black monks, Benedictines and Cluniacs have the same Rule as ours; can you tell me why there is so great a difference in the discipline?

Monk.—Know that the Cluniac monks and the Cistercians have the same Rule, but different ways of observance. They say that the rigour of the Rule was modified by certain holy fathers, in order that a greater number of souls might find salvation in the Order. With regard to the habit, in which the greatest diversity may be seen, this is what is laid down in the Rule of S. Benedict, c. 55. "Monks are not to dispute about the colour or quality of their dress, but must be satisfied with such kinds as are to be found in the province in which they live, or such as may be most cheaply obtained." But enough of these things. Keep this fixed firmly in your mind: that the author of our Order is the Holy Ghost, S. Benedict its founder, and its reformer the venerable abbot Robert.

CHAPTER II.

What conversion is, why it is so called and what are its various kinds.

Novice.—I have been thinking of the order of your proposed instruction as shown in your preliminary discourse, and

[1] This valley is commonly called Heisterbach.

I am puzzled to understand why you have placed the grace of conversion before contrition, because it seems to me an utter absurdity that anyone should be converted until he has first repented of his sins.

Monk.—Repentance sometimes goes before conversion and sometimes follows it.

Novice.—I should like you to show me this by examples; but first will you tell me what conversion is, why it is so called, what are the various kinds of it, and under what circumstances it takes place?

Monk.—Conversion is a turning of the heart, either from bad to good, or from good to better, or from better to best.

The first turning is *at* the heart and that is contrition, the second *in* the heart, which is devotion, and the third *from* the heart, which is contemplation. Conversion at the heart is the return from wilfulness to grace, from sin to uprightness, from vice to virtue. Conversion in the heart is advancing in charity, and going *from strength to strength* (Ps. viii. 7) until the God of gods appears in Sion, that is, in contemplation. Conversion from the heart is the soaring of the spirit in contemplation. Contemplation has its plane above the heart, wherefore it is called in the Scripture *ascensiones in corde* (Ezek. i. 14). Further the word is *con*version because it is a total and complete turning; as it is said, "He who forsakes one vice but still clings to another, does indeed turn, but he is not converted." There is another kind of conversion, when a man changes his monastery and his habit, through zeal for some particular form of Religion, and such a conversion may often take place without contrition. Nor is it of any value in the sight of God that a sinner should leave his abode and not his sin, should change his garment and not his heart. It is an unnatural thing to carry the heart of a wolf beneath the clothing of a sheep.

Novice.—Does this often happen?

Monk.—Yes, I will give you an example.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Prior of Clairvaux who was converted[1] *for the sake of theft, but was marvellously changed.*

Brother Godfrey[2] of our monastery, who was formerly a canon of S. Andrew in Cologne, told me, when we were novices together, a story worth remembering. He said he had been told by a well known monk of Clairvaux that a certain clerk, a regular vagabond, like those who spend their youth wandering through different provinces, came to Clairvaux, not indeed in any zeal for the Order, but that he might steal something from the monastery under the cloak of Religion. And so he became a novice, and during the whole year of his probation was continually plotting to get the treasury of the church, but was unable to satisfy his evil desires because it was too well guarded. So he thought within himself, When I am actually a monk, and have the right to serve at mass, I can easily and secretly take those chalices and get clear away. And it was with this intention that he made his profession, promised obedience and assumed the habit. But the merciful Lord, *who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live* (Ezek. xviii. 23, 32), changed his wicked will in marvellous fashion and of his great mercy converted the poison into the antidote. For no sooner had he put on his monk's dress, than he became contrite and truly converted, and made so great progress in holy religion, that no long time afterwards his sanctity of life brought him to the high office of prior at Clairvaux. And, as I have already said, his sin became a medicine for others, for thereafter he would often tell his story to the novices, who found in it great edification.

Novice.—I should much like to know how so great and wonderful a change was wrought in him.

Monk.—I think that as the first and chief cause was the mercy of God, so the secondary cause was the virtue and

[1] In the technical sense of taking the vows.

[2] This Godfrey is called Scholasticus in II. 16 and IV. 49. He is not the Godfrey of VI. 5 and XI. 43, 44.

blessing that abides in the sacred robes themselves; as one of the ancient fathers says: The habit of a monk hath a baptismal virtue.[1] Many know Henry, the lay-brother of Hemmenrode, who was master in the grange called Hart, who bore witness that the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovered over the head of a certain novice when he was being blessed by the abbot upon taking the vow.

Novice.—It is a great encouragement to me to hear this, but there comes to my memory a thought of much terror; I have heard that some have entered the Order full of good intentions, youths of exemplary innocence, who yet in process of time have looked back and perished.

Monk.—Often too have I heard of such cases. John, the lord archbishop of Trèves, a wise man, who knew all the secrets of our Order, used to say that it was rare for those who came to the Order in early youth or manhood to be truly fervent in spirit unless their consciences were burdened with a deep sense of sin. Indeed, and it is a pitiable thing to have to say, they either live lukewarm and unsatisfactory lives in the Order, or else they leave it altogether; and the reason is that they do not know the wholesome terrors of an accusing conscience; they presume upon their innocence, and so when temptations assail them, they are less able to resist. You know about our brother, who within this last month was deceived by a woman and deserted from a neighbouring grange?

Novice.—Yes, I know the sad story well.

Monk.—About him I have good reason to know that he was a youth of virgin purity and of such rigorous self-discipline that there was no other in all our community of whom I thought more highly.

Novice.—Truly the Lord, as says the prophet is *wonderful in His doings toward the children of men* (Ps. lxvi. 4).

Monk.—I will tell you also another thing, that happened in our mother Hemmenrode in the days of our elders, who related it to me.

[1] Jerome: Ep. 25 De obitu Blesillae.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the novice in Hemmenrode.

There came here one day a certain youth who very earneſtly and humbly sought admission; he was taken in and lived among us without giving any cause of complaint. He was especially beloved by a venerable prieſt named David, of whose saintliness wonderful things are told ; and this good old man would often urge him on to religious exercises with his persuasive words. Often would he and the youth recite alternately all the sequences[1] and all the sweet canticles about our Lady, by which practice the old man ſtrove to ſtimulate the devotion of the younger. In the same year, when that north wind (Jer. i. 14, 15) was blowing, the wind that engenders every kind of ill, the novice began to waver and told the holy man of his danger. But though the other comforted him with many wise discourses, all was in vain, the temptation only grew ſtronger, and at laſt despairing of his own conſtancy he said ; " I am going now, at once, for I cannot endure it any longer." " Will you wait for me," said the saint, " while I go to the church to pray?" " Yes, " he promised. But while the man of God was haſtening to the place of prayer, the youth, afraid of being hindered by his holy intercessions, hurried away with all speed and returned to the world. When the venerable prieſt came back from his prayer and found the young man had gone, he groaned and said : " It is not given to all to hold faſt to the Order."

Novice.—These are ſtupendous things you tell me. The Prior of Clairvaux, whose ſtory you related before, was converted in and through his own perversity; this youth was perverted in the very process of his conversion. Teach me, I pray you, your thoughts on these matters.

Monk.—I say with the saint, it is not given to all. In the firſt let us magnify the manifeſt mercy of God, in the other let us tremble before His hidden judgment (Rom. ix. 15).

Novice.—Will you go on to explain under what impulse, and on what occasions worldly men are attracted to the Order?

[1] Liturgical canticles which are sung before the Gospel at Mass or at Vespers.

CHAPTER V.

On what occasions men are converted.

Monk.—The occasions of conversion are many. Some seem to be converted by the direct call and inspiration of God, others on the contrary by nothing else than an instigation from the spirit of evil, some by a certain levity of mind; but the greatest number are converted by the ministry of others, as by the word of exhortation, or the power of prayer, or the example of a Religious life. Then again a vast number are drawn to the Order by different necessities, such as sickness or poverty or captivity or shame for some fault, or some danger to life, or by the terror and foretaste of the pains of hell, or by a longing for the heavenly country. All these are illustrations of those words of the gospel: *Compel them to come in* (Luke xiv. 23).

Novice.—Though all these causes seem likely enough, yet I shall be much better satisfied if you will give me examples of each.

Monk.—I will begin then with an example from which you may understand how men are converted by the direct call of God.

CHAPTER VI.

Of a canon of Liège, who was converted by the preaching of S. Bernard.

When S. Bernard was preaching the crusade in Liège in the time of Conrad, king of the Romans, a certain canon of the Cathedral, lying prostrate in prayer before one of the altars, heard a voice from heaven saying to him: "Go out and listen, for the gospel hath come to life again." And he rising from his devotions went out and found the saint preaching the crusade against the Saracens; he was giving the cross to

some, and others he was receiving into his Order. He, pricked to the heart, and led by the inward unction of the Holy Spirit, took up the cross, not indeed of that overseas expedition, but of the Order, judging it better for his soul's health to imprint the enduring cross for ever upon his heart than to sew the short lived sign upon his garment for a season. He had read the words of the Saviour, *Whoso taketh not up the cross daily and followeth me is not worthy of me* (Luke ix. 23). He said not for one year or two, but daily. Many after pilgrimage become worse than before and are more deeply entangled in their old sins; these are *like dogs that return to their vomit like sows that have been washed to their wallowing in the mire* (2 Pet. ii. 22), while the life of the monks who live strictly in one continual cross, because obedience crucifieth them limb by limb (cf. viii. 19).

Novice.—You think then that the Order is a higher vocation than a pilgrimage?

Monk.—It is judged higher, not by my authority, but by that of the Church; the Cistercian Order holds an indulgence from the Apostolic See that whoso hath taken the cross or bound himself by a vow to any pilgrimage, if he desire instead thereof to enter the Order, he shall be held guiltless in the sight of God and the Church. Moreover if these two vows, to wit, of the Order and of pilgrimage, were held to be equally efficacious to the soul's salvation, then change would be made from one to the other indifferently—whereas if a monk desert his Order to take the cross, or, what is less heinous, undertake a pilgrimage without the express permission and command of his Order, he is adjudged not a pilgrim of Christ, but an apostate. Well does the successor of Peter, to whom especially the keys of the kingdom of heaven have been given, know that it is far better inwardly to strive without ceasing against the temptations of sin than outwardly to confront for a time the swords of the Saracens. Nevertheless there were some, as I shall presently show, whom S. Bernard would not allow to come to conversion though they themselves desired it, but ordered them to be marked with the cross.

Novice.—I am glad that I asked you this question, since it has brought me so illuminating an answer.

Monk.—The said clerk together with his friend Walter followed S. Bernard to Clairvaux and there both became monks. It happened at this time that a band was to be sent out to Aulne, a monastery of regulars, because the monks of this place had consented to submit themselves to the Order, and this Liégeois had a great desire to go with the other brethren; but he was afraid to tell his desire to the abbot, lest perchance it should seem to spring from no better motive than a desire for change; and so he turned to the Lord, and prayed that He would show him what He would have him to do. And a voice came to him: "Ask what thou wilt, and it shall be done unto thee." Straightway he went to his abbot, and spoke out boldly: "Father, if it be your will, gladly would I go with these brothers." And the answer came at once, "Go with them in the name of the Lord." So both he and Walter went with the new convent to Aulne, and not long after he was made prior there. On a day when he was chanting the sext of our Lady, one of his monks made the sign to him that he wished to make his confession, and because he was thus engaged, he signed to him to wait a little. And soon that sext was over, and both of them passed into the choir. While the prior was standing in his stall an angel of the Lord, as was afterwards evident, in the likeness and dress of this same monk, prostrated himself at the feet of the prior as if about to make his confession: and when he sought to raise him up, he vanished. And the prior bethought himself, and he realised that this had been the guardian angel of the monk who desired to confess, and that it was a sign of rebuke to him for his repulse.

Novice.—I marvel greatly that the holy angel of the Lord should deign to prostrate himself so humbly at the feet of a man.

Monk.—When our superiors refuse us that which they are bound to use for our soul's health, and especially that which is suggested to us by our guardian angel for our help, it is as if the refusal were made to the angels themselves. The angel indeed prostrated himself before a man, heaven before earth, gold before dross, that by such an act he might reprove him for his negligence, and by the shock of fear might make him

more careful thenceforth. When the office was over, the prior called the monk to him and said "Now make your confession" and he replied " Indeed, Sir, I can well wait till to-morrow." But he cried out vehemently : " I will not taste of food this day until I have heard your confession." It was then the dinner hour : but the monk yielded and made his confession : and the prior vowed to God that from that time forth no kind of circumstance or occupation, no beginning of an office, no *service* to the Mother of God should ever prevent him from hearing a confession when once he had seen the accustomed signal of desire. When age increased upon him, and he could no longer perform the duties of his priorate through weakness of body, he exchanged the toil of Martha for the quiet of Mary : for he made vows to God that he would recite the psalter from beginning to end every day; and so, filled with virtues, he departed to be with the Lord and was joined to the company of the holy angels. Walter his countryman, who told this story to Dom Henry our abbot, from whom I heard it, related how he longed *to depart and be with Christ* (Phil. i. 23), and would cry daily, *" When shall I come to appear before the presence of God ! "* (Ps. xlii. 2) and how the divine voice made answer *" Thine eyes shall behold the King in His beauty "* (Is. xxxiii. 17). When he died, a bright star appeared in broad daylight over the place of his passing, and was seen throughout the whole province.

Novice.—That is credible enough; since the vision of that shining star would show the virtues of the departing soul.

Monk.—That is well said; and it is to be remembered that it is an almost unheard-of thing for any star to be visible in the sky when the sun is shining. Assuredly the appearance of it above the dying saint was a sign that his holy soul in the beauty of its virtues was truly united to Christ the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. vi. 2).

Novice.—I do not marvel that Christ should so excellently glorify the death of a saint whom He had so clearly called.

Monk.—I will tell you now of the conversion of a monk, which was wrought, as you will clearly see, by the call of God, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit alone, and by no other agency whatever.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the abbot Gevard, who before his conversion was seen in a cowl by Dom Everard, the parish priest of S. James' in Cologne.

In the church of S. Maria im Capitol in Cologne there was a canon named Gevard, at that time in early manhood and much occupied with worldly vanities. At a certain festival at this church he was in his usual place, and there was present also the parish priest of S. James', Dom Everard, a man both upright and spiritual and honoured throughout the city for his saintliness. Now when he came to the entrance of the choir and looked within, he saw Gevard tonsured and in the habit of a Cistercian monk standing among his fellow canons; and he wondered greatly and said to himself: "When can Gevard have become a monk?" And when he realised that this was a vision, he came to the conclusion that it was a prophecy, as indeed the event proved. And because the purpose of the divine will cannot be changed, it was necessary that what God had foreshadowed for him should in every particular be fulfilled. Wherefore after a short lapse of time it came about that this youth to the astonishment of many bade farewell to the world, and entered the monastery of Hemmenrode, and became a novice there. And when the aforesaid priest heard of this, he came to Hemmenrode, and visited Gevard and told to all the novices the story of his vision. This I heard from father Frederick, a monk who was present when the holy man was speaking. Later Gevard made so great progress in Religion that he succeeded the lord Herman, who was the first abbot of Petersthal; and under him the monastery made great advance as well in spiritual life as in worldly goods. Moreover if these recent examples have not proved enough, I will give you further undoubted proofs from the words of S. Bernard.

Novice.—I shall indeed be glad to hear them, for they have not yet come within the limits of my reading.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the conversion of Mascelin, a clerk of the Bishop of Mainz.

Once when S. Bernard had gone into Germany to mediate peace between Lothaire king of the Romans and the grandsons of his predecessor Henry, Albert the Bishop of Mainz sent a clerk of his, Mascelin by name, to meet him. When he said he had been sent by his lord to do him service, the man of God looked upon him for a while and said: "Another Lord hath commissioned thee to serve Him." And when he, terrified by the words of the saint, continued to assert that he had been sent by the bishop, the blessed Bernard replied: "Thou art mistaken; a greater Lord hath sent thee, even Christ." At last he understood the meaning of the saint, and said: "Do you think that I desire to become a monk? that be far from me; I have never dreamed of such a step, neither has the thought entered my mind." Nevertheless although he persisted in his denial, the servant of God continued to affirm that it must most certainly come about, not because it was he that had originated the thought, but because God had so ordained. On that same journey the clerk was converted, bade farewell to the world and became a monk in Clairvaux. You see then how in this man there was no desire for conversion, and how the will of the Holy Spirit wrought in him unaided.

Novice.—I agree with all you say; but give me, I pray you, an example of the contrary, how some are converted by the direct impulse of the evil spirit.

Monk.—Here is an example.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the conversion of Doctor Stephen de Vitry.

We read in the life of the aforesaid father that once there came to Clairvaux Master Stephen de Vitry, a man of great

learning, for the sake of conversion, as everyone thought. While the whole valley was rejoicing at his coming, thinking him so important a convert, the blessed Bernard exclaimed, "The devil hath brought him here: he hath come alone: alone shall he return." For to this end he had come, that he might carry back again to the world certain novices whom he himself had formerly inſtructed in letters. That he might not cause pain to the weaker brethren, S. Bernard admitted the man, and although he knew well that he would not persevere, permitted him to become a novice. But the evil spirit, after whispering all that year into the ears of the novices by the mouth of this servant of his, found no profit in his venture, and carried him back, ſtill alone, and with much confusion of face, according to the prophecy of the man of God. Liſten also to another example from our own neighbourhood.

CHAPTER X.

Of the conversion of the prieſt Goswin, who ran away during his probation, carrying ſtolen goods with him.

There came to us two wandering prieſts seeking admission; but since there was scarcely any hope of their perseverance, their requeſt was refused. One went away, but the other, whose name was Goswin, begged so hard to be allowed to ſtay that at laſt he was admitted. He continued on probation for barely six weeks and then one night during Matins, in obedience to the orders of him who had brought him there, he fled carrying with him what he had been able to ſteal.

Novice.—Perhaps he came with guileless intentions.

Monk.—Assuredly not. While he was ſtill in the gueſt house with his companion, and was finding great difficulty in being admitted further, the one said to the other, "Although they are so ſtern with us now, we shall yet find means to deceive them." This was overheard by one of our lay-brothers without their knowledge.

Still more often have we found men converted from a certain levity of mind.

CHAPTER XI.

Of a canon of Cologne who withdrew before putting on the habit.

A young canon of Cologne once came to us, more, as the sequel showed, from levity of mind than from any real desire for conversion, and we, especially the younger brethren, were overjoyed at his proposal, but the lord Gevard, our abbot, though much importuned to receive him, refused, because he recognised that levity was his only motive, seeing that he had gambled away his clothes and had come indeed clad in nothing but a tunic, and he soon returned by the way he came, nor was he ever heard again to speak of conversion.

CHAPTER XII.

Also of another youth who was taken from his probation for the purpose of paying his debts and never came back.

Another youth of a noble and wealthy family, came to us without the knowledge of his parents and easily obtained admission; I do not wish to give the names either of this novice or of the last mentioned, for I still hope that they may come back, and I am unwilling to cause them any unnecessary embarrassment. Three or perhaps five days after he became a novice, his friends came full of grief, and with many prayers exhorted him to return to the world. They knew that he had lost a sum of money at some game and had taken the vows

more from chagrin than from devotion. For some time they could not prevail upon him, but at last succeeded in persuading him to go and pay his debt on the condition that he should come back immediately. So not by the violence, but by the cunning of his friends he was drawn away and never came back. Now he had made his solemn vow with his hands between the hands of the abbot, and for the breaking of this vow, he was brought before the consistory court. He defended himself by producing a letter from the Pope's legate and by every means in his power, asserting that he had made his vow thoughtlessly and in distress and confusion of mind; moreover, if that had not been the case, he would have followed the example of our abbot Henry.

Novice.—May I know what that was?

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the conversion of the abbot Henry.

Monk.—In the church of Bonn this same Henry was a wealthy canon, and, by the inspiration of God, he secretly left the deceitful world and, being kindled with a longing for the Cistercian Order, came to our house to seek admission. While he was still in the guesthouse, his two brothers, who were knights, heard of his flight, and being worldly men who set more value upon carnal and temporal pleasures than upon spiritual and eternal happiness, they were much troubled by what should have been a joy to them. They came in haste and sent before them a young lad to take him a pretended message from his mother, so that they might use the opportunity to tear him by force from the convent. And when this boy had brought him into the place of ambush, the knights ran up, threw him upon a horse in spite of his unwillingness and resistance, and to the great grief of the whole convent, took him away; for he had not yet put on the monk's dress. For some time he stayed quietly with them, but when they

had grown sure of him, he fled away again, and hastened to put on the habit that he might make the step irrevocable. His conduct was the exact opposite to that of the other two, because his conversion was not prompted by the vice of levity, but by the virtue of constancy. This example and some others that I purpose to set down here for edification, I remember that I have already written in the " Moral Homilies upon the Infancy of the Saviour."

Novice.—Surely it is a grievous sin for a novice to return to the world.

Monk.—How serious is the fault may be easily seen from the punishment that follows it.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the miserable death of Leo, an apostate novice.

Before I joined the Order, there was a certain canon of the church of S. Maria im Capitol in Cologne who bade farewell to the world and assumed the habit of religion in Hemmenrode. His name was Leo and I knew him well. Two brothers of his, who were knights of some influence in the world, were very angry when they heard of his conversion and hurried off to Hemmenrode. Long they urged him to return to the world, and dwelt upon the austerities of the Order; then they changed their mode of attack and spoke of the entanglement of his debts, saying that it would be only right for him to come back first and settle them, and then they would let him return to serve God without opposition, nay more, they would themselves escort him back. The wretched novice, led away by their arguments, consented to go, not perceiving the snare of the enemy. When the abbot Herman saw this, he groaned, and in deep grief said to the knights, " You are this day casting your brother out of Paradise and lodging him in hell." Returning to his prebend, he became worse than before, giving more pains to gratify his lusts than to pay his debts. After a few

years he fell grievously sick, and by the just judgment of God, the extremity of his sickness changed into madness, and when his friends admonished him concerning confession and communion, he kept crying out continually the names of various women with whom he had sinned when in health. Then they cut up puppies and placed their warm flesh upon his head as if for a remedy, but this profited him nothing; for no flesh could heal his madness, which was sent him as the penalty of apostasy. Hear also an example of yet another novice.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the awful death of the novice Benneco, and how it is not lawful for novices to return to the world after taking the vow.

A certain knight whose name was Benneco, a native of Palmirsdorp, was on probation with me as a novice, a man indeed of ripe age, but with little devotion to religion. He was tempted in many ways, but would not listen to the advice of his brethren, and as a dog to his vomit, so did the wretched man return to the world. When repeating this the second time, he was forstalled by sickness and died in his own house and in secular dress without giving any sign of repentance. At his death a fearful storm of wind raged round the house where he lay, and a vast number of crows hovered over the roof; and these portents caused so much panic that none was left to tend the dying man save only one old woman. See then how they die, who depart from God.

Novice.—I think that that storm of wind and multitude of cawing crows was an evident sign of the presence of demons.

Monk.—Surely; for the Saviour saith, "No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back is worthy of the kingdom of heaven." That knight, because he "looked back" in apostacy, because he would not repent of his sin, caused joy among the ministers of hell.

Novice.—If it is so mortal a sin for a novice to return to the world, what then is the meaning of S. Benedict's instruction, that when the rule has been read over to the novice, it should be said to him: "This is the law under which thou desirest to enlist; if thou canst keep it, go forward; if not, go in peace."

Monk.—Of the two ills the holy father prefers that the novice should depart while still a novice rather than desert as a monk after making his profession. Whence he judges the novice to be unbound with regard to the place, but bound by his vow. Quite apart from those who have put on religious dress and have once and again promised constancy in the presence of the whole Chapter, even secular persons, who have by word alone made the vow between the hands of the abbot are by no means permitted to follow a secular calling or to enter into matrimony. In cases of necessity the lord Pope will give a novice a dispensation to exchange into a less severe Order, but even he cannot permit him to return to a secular life. Thus, from what I have said you can see that some are converted by the direct call of God, while others are prompted by the instigation of the evil spirit, and others again by mere levity of mind. That many are converted by the ministry of others is indisputable; for as of old in the tabernacle of God curtain drew curtain, so to-day in the church of God brother draws brother in the three ways of exhortation, prayer and the example of a holy life, a triple cord which is not easily broken.

Novice.—May I have examples of this?

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the conversion of Henry the cripple of Clairvaux.

Eleven years ago there died in Clairvaux a monk called Henry, an aged and holy man, crippled indeed and broken in body, but tender and loving in heart; to him God gave many consolations, often and in many ways revealing Himself to him; he was mighty in the spirit of prophecy and full of all

spiritual grace. At the time of the general Chapter, many abbots would come to visit him and ever received much edification from his discourse. Gevard, our lord abbot, was his familiar friend, and to him he related the whole story of his conversion. When S. Bernard was preaching the cross in the diocese of Constance it happened that Henry was present to hear him, and since he was a rich and powerful noble with many castles, who with all his wealth had many crimes upon his conscience, he was pricked to the heart by the sermon of the man of God, and said to him, " Sir, if I were not terrified by that custom which I understand prevails in your Order,—I mean that you send indifferently to all parts of the earth those who join your company,—I would submit myself to you forthwith." The saint replied, " I will not receive you with any conditions; but this I can promise you, that if you become a monk in Clairvaux, in that monastery you shall surely die." When he heard this he made his submission; and because he was well skilled in both French and German, he was appointed the abbot's interpreter. Now a servant of his, a crossbowman, a man of cruel temper and prone to the shedding of blood, when he saw what had happened, was maddened by the conversion of his master, and placed a bolt upon his crossbow that he might slay the abbot. And immediately he was stricken by the angel of the Lord and fell back and expired. Henry, terrified by his sudden death, and above all appalled that his soul should be lost, and knowing the holiness of the abbot and his power of working miracles, fell at his feet, humbly imploring him with great insistence to deliver the wretched man from the jaws of hell by restoring him to life. The blessed saint was moved to compassion by the grief of one and the perdition of the other, and on his knees besought God with tears, who quickly raised the dead. And he, thus restored to life, threw himself at the feet of his deliverer, and prayed him with much weeping to receive him as a convert. And the holy man made answer : " I know that by nature you are a wanton and perverse, and that it is not fitting that you should live among the religious; therefore I bid you take the cross and pass over the seas, and quickly find your end in fighting against the Saracens." So he did; he received the

cross, passed over the sea, fought against the enemies of the cross, was slain in battle, and came to appear before the presence of God. At the same time a paralytic woman cried out after the man of God, beseeching health of him; and since she could not follow him, for he had already gone on before, Henry, taking pity on her, lifted her on to his horse and brought her into the presence of the saint, and set her down when she had received his blessing. She then, made whole, stood upright, and full of joy went to her home on her own feet. This story I heard from the lips of Gevard our lord abbot. This is that Henry who was once sent by the same holy father into a far-off country where the ice broke under his feet and he was drawn far under the water; from which deadly peril he was miraculously saved by the blessing of the saint. Here you have an example of one who was converted by preaching. But why do I seek examples from outside when I can rejoice that this which I tell of others was truly accomplished in myself?

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the conversion of the author.

At the time when King Philip first devastated the diocese of Cologne, I happened to be travelling thither in the company of Gevard the lord abbot of Walberberg. On the way he exhorted me to conversion with much fervour but without success, until he told me of that glorious vision of Clairvaux, and how it is related that at a certain harvest time when the monks were reaping in the valley, the Virgin Mary, the holy mother of God, and her mother, S. Anne, and S. Mary Magdalene, in full view of a holy man who was standing on the opposite hill, came down the mountain side into the valley in a great flood of light, and wiped the sweat from the brows of the monks and fanned them with the flap of their sleeves, and the rest of the wonderful story. I was much moved by his

recital of this vision and promised the abbot that I would go to no other monaſtery for my conversion, if indeed God should give me the will. At that time I had bound myself by a vow of pilgrimage to S. Mary of Rocamadour, and I was conſtrained to fulfil it. Three months later when this was accomplished, I came to Peterſthal without consulting any of my friends, but guided and urged by the mercy of God alone, and there fulfilled in deed that to which I had committed myself in word, and became a novice. Almoſt the same experience befel another monk of ours, Gerlach de Dinge.

Novice.—This ſtory will surely be useful as an example to those who are ſtill living in the world.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of Gerlach de Dinge who was converted by hearing a sermon.

Three years ago Dom Henry, who is now our abbot, while visiting monaſteries in Friesland on behalf of the abbot of Clairvaux, happened to be entertained in the caſtle of a certain knight named Sueder. To this knight, who welcomed him with much eagerness, he related, as he loved to do, some of the wonderful things that had come to pass in the Order; and among the company who liſtened to him was this Gerlach, the knight's nephew and a canon of the cathedral of Utrecht. This man received the seed of the word in the field of his heart as in a good ground, and not long afterwards brought forth fruit a hundredfold. For he, as he told me later when we were on probation together, began from that hour to incline towards conversion and to consider diligently how he might satisfy the desire that had been born in him. An opportunity came to him of acting without arousing suspicion, and he set out for Paris as if to continue his ſtudies; and after some little ſtay there he came to us, and becoming a novice, turned all his ſtudies to spiritual learning. From these two examples

it is clear that some are converted by preaching. Whoso heareth the voice of the Lord calling him by inward speech must needs desire to call others by the word of exhortation.

Novice.—The examples you have given me about preaching have fully satisfied me; now I pray you give me some about prayer.

Monk.—Just as the exhortation of preaching converts many, so does the power of prayer draw an exceeding great number to the Order.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the conversion of Henry, brother of the King of France.

It happened that Henry, brother of the King of France, came once to Clairvaux to speak with the blessed Bernard on some worldly matter, and during his visit he passed through the whole convent, asking all the monks for their prayers. The venerable abbot, besides other advice that he gave him with regard to the life of salvation, said, "I trust in the Lord that you will not die in your present condition, but that you will quickly prove by experience how great is the power of those prayers you have sought." And indeed the proof was given that very day to the wonder of many, who rejoiced over the conversion of so exalted a personage. His own people mourned and bewailed him as inconsolably as if they saw him lying dead before their eyes.

Novice.—I am not surprised that he should be so quickly converted, who had already shown himself so apt for conversion.

Monk.—If you ascribe his conversion more to his own merits than to the prayers of the good monks, listen to what happened afterwards. When his companions and his whole household were, as I have said, lamenting for Henry, a certain Parisian named Andrew, driven almost to madness by an

intolerable access of grief, kept crying out with curses and blasphemies that his master was beside himself, witless, feeble-minded. When Henry besought the saint to labour for the conversion of this man, he was answered : " Do not be anxious on his behalf, his soul just now is in bitterness, but he is yours." He repeated these words in the hearing of Andrew, and he, in his absolute abhorrence of the monastic life, said silently in his heart, as he afterwards confessed : " Now will I prove you to be a false prophet in this thing, for of this at least I am sure, that what you have said will never come to pass. I will upbraid you with this in the presence of the King and princes in some notable gathering, that all men may know you for a lying prophet." The next day he went away, calling down all manner of curses upon the monastery, and wishing that the valley itself might be torn up from its foundations. That very night he was conquered and, so to speak, bound hand and foot by the Holy Spirit of God, whose grace so drew him and wrought in him that he could scarce wait for the dawn, when he hurried back to the monastery (to the astonishment of all), and showing himself a second Saul of Tarsus, made his submission to the saint. Where, I ask you, was in this man any willingness to be converted or any aptitude for conversion? See how this Andrew turned away from grace with all his strength, and how the power of the prayers of the saints was mighty to convert him.

Novice.—These are indeed stupendous wonders, and surely it seems to me that the prayers of the faithful ought to be coveted by sinners more than all else in the world.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the conversion of one who appeared to another at night before the gate in the guise of an infant.

There was a monk in our house who, when he entered the Order, left behind him in the world an only brother not yet

old enough to take the vows. Fearing that he might become ensnared in the hindrances of the world and his conversion be thus impeded, he prayed to the Lord daily, and especially to His blessed mother, that in answer to his prayers He might deign to hasten on his conversion; for well he knew how easily the young may be turned from their purpose and how therefore every hour spent in the world was full of danger. The merciful Lord gave heed to the pious zeal of the monk for his brother, and put it into the heart of our abbot to admit the boy, although he could not receive one so young without some risk of exceeding his duty. On the night that he put on the habit, one of our priests saw this vision concerning him; it seemed to him that a most beautiful matron stood before the monastery gate, holding a beautiful boy in her arms; and when he asked her whose boy it was, she replied, " He is the son of the monk—" mentioning the elder brother by name, and at the same time giving the name of the new novice. And then the monk who saw the vision realised that this most beautiful matron was the blessed mother of God. According to the apostle, whoso by word or example teacheth another to live the good life, begetteth him as his own son in Christ (1 Cor. iv. 15 ; Phile. 10). The fact that the ever venerated Virgin Mary deigned to present him at the monastery gate, as a mother might present her child, shows plainly that the aforesaid monk had by his prayers obtained the conversion of his brother through her infinite merit.

Novice.—These examples have convinced me of the power of prayer; it remains that I should also be convinced of the power of good example.

Monk.—Know this, that many, without any exhortation of preaching and unaided by any special prayers, are daily drawn to the Order by good example alone, and by the proofs of devotion, discipline and sanctity which they behold.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the monks Theodoric and Bernard, who at the sight of a supplication for mercy at the burial of a dead man, resolved upon conversion.

When brother Theodoric our fellow monk was still a young man in the world, he came to visit a certain priest, a relative of his, who was then a novice; but not with any idea of being himself converted. It happened at this time that a dead brother was being buried, and after the interment, when the antiphon "O clementissime Domine" had been said, and when all the monks, gathered round the tomb, were humbly beseeching pardon, and repeating, "Lord have mercy upon the sinner," he was so pricked to the heart and so kindled with a desire of conversion, that though he had resisted the exhortations of the prior Gevard, now with many tears he sought permission to take the vows, and with difficulty obtained it. Often during our probation did he tell me that this was the way of his conversion. Brother Bernard, too, of our convent, told me that it was the sight of a similar supplication for mercy in the monastery of Villers, that first gave birth in him to the desire of conversion.

Novice.—It is surprising that so small a thing should work so great salvation in the soul.

Monk.—Why should it surprise you? In size a pill is but a small thing, but in efficacy its power is very great; it traverses all the channels of the body, dissolves and ejects ill humours and makes a sick man whole. If so great good results from the reception of one little material pill, why should you wonder that a greater power, and all the greater because spiritual, should come from the witnessing of one supplication for mercy. Hear this also.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the conversion of Dom Adolphus, bishop of Osnaburg.

Dom Adolphus, a youth of noble birth, and now bishop of Osnaburg, had, when a canon of Cologne, come to a house of our Order called Kloster-Camp. Here, after mass, he was kneeling in prayer in the church, and saw how the monks, both young and old, hastened to the different altars, and there bared each his back to the scourge, humbly confessing his sins. This sight, as was told me afterwards by an intimate friend of his, wrought so strongly in the heart of the young man that he could not tear himself away from the convent, but despising all the pomp of the world gave himself wholly to God, and then put on the sacred dress of the monk. And in this new life he so far succeeded that not long after, recommended both by his noble birth and his sanctity, he ascended the episcopal throne in the aforesaid church.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the conversion of Henry the chamberlain.

This was the manner of the conversion of brother Henry, our chamberlain. When he was a clerk and canon of the cathedral of Trèves, and holding many other ecclesiastical stipends, he fell ill. In the hope of recovering his health, he took money and arranged to go down the river to Cologne to consult one of the many physicians in that town, and also to derive some benefit from the change of air. When he came opposite our monastery, he enquired the name of the place, and when he learnt it, he said that he would like to ask

hospitality of the monaſtery, and so sent forward his servants to the abbot with a requeſt for horses to take him up the hill, and these were duly sent. That same night he was converted, whether by some vision that he saw, or by some ſtrong impulse, I know not, but in the morning he sent back the boat with his sorrowing servants, and putting on the monk's dress according to rule, made his permanent abode with us.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the conversion of the prieſt Gerlach.

Brother Gerlach, who is a prieſt and our fellow monk told me that he conceived his firſt desire of conversion from the signs of devotion that he saw in one of our brethren. One day when this monk, who is well known to you, was celebrating mass in his parish, he showed so great a grace of tears, as indeed was his wont, that Gerlach who was ſtanding at his side as server, observed this grace with wonder and gave thanks to the Lord. From that hour he so fell in love with the Order that he could not reſt till he had been made a member of it. Many things more I could tell you of those who have been converted by the example of others, but I muſt be careful not to be too long.

Novice.—From all you have told me it is clear that some are converted by the word of exhortation, others by the power of prayer, and others again by the example of a religious life.

Monk.—I said above that there are many other causes that are the occasion of conversion to many, such as sickness, poverty, captivity, the brand of some infamy, danger to this present life, the fear or the vision of the pains of hell, or simply the longing for the heavenly life.

Novice.—I pray you add some examples of these.

Monk.—We see daily how men are driven to conversion by sickness.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of Ludwig the knight, whose health came back to him after he had made a vow of conversion.

Three years ago a knight named Ludwig, of the caſtle of Altenahr, was in extremity of sickness, and the lord abbot was summoned to visit the sick man. When the illness grew upon him, and the knight was already in despair, he was advised by the abbot to submit to the Order, and to repeat aloud the vow of conversion according to cuſtom. Both he and his wife gladly acquiesced in this advice, and no sooner had he placed his hands within the hands of the abbot and made the vow than his appearance began to change in such a way that the deathly pallor passed from his face, and the livid colour gave way to a healthy flush, so that all those who ſtood by were ſtupefied, marvelling at the gift of God to the dying man. That the merciful Lord might the more plainly show that He had healed the sick man because of his vow to enter the Order, this same knight quickly became convalescent without the sweating or bleeding or sneezing which always accompany recovery from such a sickness. Nor was he ungrateful for the divine mercies, but caused himself forthwith to be carried to our monaſtery where he became firſt novice, and then monk, and not long after departed to be with the Lord.

Novice.—I gather from your words that you believe that a sick man may prolong his days by penitence and prayer.

CHAPTER XXVI.

How God sometimes prolongs the life of a sinner for his penitence; the example of Hezekiah.

Monk.—That is not quite what I mean, for I do not think that any man can prolong the time allotted to him by God; but I believe that he can sometimes escape imminent death. Indeed, if that were not so, it would be vain for the Church

to pray for the sick. Since the prayers of the saints bring back life to the dead, how shall they not effect a lesser thing, and give health to those in mortal sickness? When Hezekiah lay sick in penitence and tears, it was said to him by God through Isaiah, *I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold I will add fifteen years to thy days* (Isaiah xxxviii. 5). Upon which passage Haymo speaks thus, "We must understand that, as it was granted to the first man that he should be immortal on condition of his obedience to God's commands, so in the foreknowledge of God the years here are granted on condition that he live humbly and innocently before Him; for those years, which pride had taken from him, humility hath restored.

Novice.—These are deep matters, and I pray you to explain them more fully by the testimony of the Scriptures, because the problem of Divine foreknowledge has been the cause of error to many souls.

Monk.—The problem of Divine foreknowledge is indeed for me altogether insoluble, *for who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?* (Rom. xi. 34). Nevertheless the authority of the Scriptures can be found for what I have said above. The holy Job, speaking of the uncertainty of human life, says, *Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass* (Job xiv. 5). Notice that you have in this passage a boundary of life allotted to man by God, and that this boundary may not be passed. Yet a man by evil life may sometimes anticipate this boundary as the Psalmist bears witness when he says, *The bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days* (Ps. lv. 25). If it is not allowed them to live out half the days which they might have lived but for their sins, it is clear that they die far within the limits first assigned to them. In the same way the good sometimes deserve to anticipate their appointed end, as it is said about one good man as a type of all the good: *Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul* (Wisd. iv. 11).

Therefore let foolish men cease to prattle foolish words and to cherish foolish thoughts because in these days there are few princes and few nobles who fulfil their days and come to a

good old age. Why is this? Assuredly because they plunder the poor, and are choked before their time by the tears of the poor. Would you like to hear this illustrated by the story of a tyrant, who sinned the more recklessly because he believed that no sin could shorten his predestined days?

Novice.—Indeed, I eagerly wish it.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of predestination and the errors of the Landgrave Ludwig.

Monk.—I have heard from a certain religious man that the Landgrave Ludwig, who died two years ago, had fallen into a grievous error which was perilous, not only to his own soul, but also to the property of his subjects. He was one of the worst of robbers and tyrants, who made innumerable exactions from the people committed to his charge, and took violent possession of the property of countless churches. When he was taken to task for these and many other wrongs by his spiritual advisers, who put before him in confession the punishment of the wicked, and the happiness of the chosen, he made this miserable reply: "If I am one of the elect, no sins will be able to take from me the Kingdom of Heaven; if I am already foredoomed, no good deeds will be able to confer it upon me." And as I have often heard from father Conrad, our aged fellow monk, he used to put forward as an argument to excuse himself to those who reasoned with him that verse of the Psalmist, *All the whole heavens are the Lord's; the earth hath He given to the children of men* (Ps. cxv. 16), for he was well versed in letters, and the more hardened on this account. When God-fearing men said to him, "Sir, have pity upon your soul; cease to sin, lest the Lord, provoked by your sins, slay the sinner in the midst of his sin," he again replied, "When the appointed day comes for me to die, I shall die; I shall not be able to put it off by living well, nor to put it forward by living ill." God in His mercy willing to bring

him to a better mind, and to call him back though straying so far away, began to scourge him with a sore disease. His doctor was summoned, a good and wise man, and no mean expert in theology as well as in medicine, to whom the prince said, " As you see, I am very ill; give all your care to restoring me to health." The doctor, bearing in mind the peculiar error of the man, answered, " Sir, if the day of your death has come, no care of mine can save you from it; but if you are not destined to die of this sickness, all medicine will be superfluous." And he : " Why do you make me such a reply? If I neglect myself, or take the advice of unskilled persons, I shall die before my time." When the doctor heard this, he laughed aloud and, seizing the opportunity, said, " Sir, if you believe that your life can be prolonged by the power of medicine, why do you refuse to believe in the virtue of penitence and good works which are the medicine of the soul? Without these the soul must die, without them none can come to the glorious health of the future life." The Landgrave, recognising the force of these words, and perceiving that there was good reason in them, said, " For the future, be not only the physician of my body, but of my soul also, for by your healing tongue God hath delivered me from a fatal error."

Novice.—Did not this prince live a good life afterwards?

Monk.—Alas no! He made promises in words which he did not carry out in deeds. You will learn in the sequel what sort of an end was his, and under how great a burden of sin he died. But now let us go back to our former subject, and leave this long digression which has followed upon your question.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

How some are converted through poverty.

As the wholesome medicine of sickness draws many to the Order, so too a vast number are driven to enter by the furnace

of poverty. Often have we seen and still daily do we see persons who have been living for some time in wealth and honour in the world, such as knights and merchants, coming to the Order under the compulsion of poverty, preferring to supply their need in the service of God, in whose hand are all riches, than to endure the shamefacedness of poverty among their relations and friends. When a certain honourable man was explaining to me the way of his conversion, he added, "Certainly, if my affairs had continued to be prosperous, I should never have entered the Order." I have known some who, when their fathers or brothers were taking the vows, refused to follow their example then, but when they had consumed all their property, they came covering their necessity with the cloak of devotion, or rather, making a virtue of their necessity.

Novice.—It is not necessary to ask for examples of such cases, since we see so many come to the Order, converted on that account; but happy are they who still possessed riches, and counted them nothing for the sake of Christ.

Monk.—Not happy for possessing riches, but for despising them. The widow's two mites are more pleasing to God than all the alms of the wealthy. Know also that some are converted through shame for some fault, or through the brand of some disgrace.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of a canon who was converted through shame for a theft he had committed.

There was a young novice in our house who was drawn to the Order by the following circumstances. He had been a canon of a church in Cologne, and had stolen something from his Superior, an honest clerk in whose house he was living at the time. It was a small[1] theft, but he was caught in the act

[1] Of a single apple. J. Strange.

by the servants and was so much ashamed that he fled from the world, sought out our monaſtery and became a novice. He preferred to serve God than to endure so great confuſion of face among his fellows. I had a poſt in that Church at the time, and underſtood the cauſe of his converſion to be as I have ſtated, and I was full of fears, because ſuch a converſion did not ſeem likely to have laſting results.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of a youth, in whoſe caſe a nun, made pregnant by him, was the cauſe of converſion.

There was another youth who violated a certain nun, and urged both by ſhame and fear, because ſhe was nobly born, he took the vows in our Order. So that what the devil had prepared for his ruin became for him an occaſion of ſalvation. The youth ſpoken of above deſerted the Order, by the juſt judgement of God, but this one is ſtill perſevering, the mercy of God preſerving him.

Novice.—As I ſee it, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſhoweth mercy (Rom. ix. 16).

Monk.—That is true. That ſome alſo are converted by danger to this preſent life, you ſhall learn by the following example.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of a nobleman who was ſaved from a capital ſentence by converſion.

When King Otto went to Rome to be crowned Emperor, he left his kingdom upon the Moſelle to be governed by his

brother Henry, the Count Palatine, before whom a certain noble was brought to trial as a freebooter and was by him condemned to death. There came to the court, Daniel, the abbot of Schoenau, and by his prayers succeeded in obtaining from the Palatine permission for him to live and expiate his sins in the Cistercian monastery. Thus a man who was condemned to death for his crimes escaped the sentence by the grace of conversion. I have often heard similar stories, how wicked men, condemned to various punishments for their offences, have been delivered by benefit of the Order.

Novice.—Although these may seem small matters, yet they are not to be regarded lightly, because they have a real value for edification.

Monk.—Let those, who are tempted to think lightly of them, hear great and terrible things about those who have been converted through fear of the pains of hell.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of the conversion of the abbot of Morimond, who died and returned to life.

Twenty four years ago there was an abbot of Morimond who was brought to the Order in the way I am going to tell you; the story was told me by Dom Herman the abbot of Marienstatt, who saw this same abbot and heard him speak, and watched all his actions attentively, as of one who had died and lived again. When he was a young man, he studied at Paris with the many other scholars there. Now since he was of slow intelligence and weak memory, he was scarcely able to grasp or retain any knowledge whatever, and so he became a butt to all, for they judged him little better than an idiot; and this was a source of great trouble to him, and because of it his life became a burden. It happened that one day he fell sick, and lo! Satan appeared to him and said "If you will do me homage, I will make you the greatest scholar in the world." When he heard this the youth was

terrified and replied to the suggeſtion of the devil: "Get thee behind me, Satan; never ſhalt thou be my maſter, nor I thy man." And when he thus refuſed, the evil ſpirit took his hand, opened it with some violence and thruſt a ſtone into it, saying, "As long as you keep this ſtone in your hand, all knowledge will be yours" and so disappeared. The youth rose from his bed, went into the ſchools, where he propounded hard queſtions, and easily ſurpaſſed all others in diſputation, to the aſtoniſhment of all who wondered at the knowledge and eloquence of the erſtwhile idiot, and were ſtupified at ſo marvellous a change. But he kept the ſecret well, nor would he diſcloſe to anyone the means by which he had gained his extraordinary learning.

Not long after he fell ill with a mortal ſickneſs, and the prieſt was ſummoned to hear his confeſſion. Amongſt other things he confeſſed how he had received the ſtone from the devil, and with the ſtone his ſtrange knowledge. The prieſt cried out, "Throw it away, unhappy man, or you will never come to the knowledge of God." "Stricken with terror, he threw away the ſtone, which till now he had always kept in his hand, and with the ſtone gave up all his falſe knowledge. What need of more? The clerk died; his body was laid in the church, and all the ſcholars took their places round the bier to ſing the pſalms in the Chriſtian faſhion. But his ſoul was carried away by demons, who bore it to a deep and awful ravine, from which a ſulphurous vapour unceaſingly aroſe. There they placed themſelves on either ſide of the valley, and thoſe on the one ſide hurled the miſerable ſoul as if they were playing ball, and thoſe on the other caught it in their hands as it hurtled through the miſt. So exceedingly ſharp were their claws that they far ſurpaſſed the ſharpeſt needle or the keeneſt point of ſteel, nor, as he afterwards ſaid, could any kind of torture known upon earth compare with the agony he felt, both when they hurled and when they caught him.

But the Lord had mercy upon him; and there came a meſſenger from heaven, a Being of noble and awful aſpect, who delivered this word to the demons: "Liſten," he ſaid "It is the command of the moſt High that you releaſe this ſoul whom

you deceived." At once they all obeyed and released the soul, nor presumed any more to lift finger against him. So now the soul returned to the body and reanimated the lifeless limbs so that he revived and stood up, bringing panic-stricken flight upon all the scholars who were sitting orderly about the coffin. Coming down from the bier, he told all men that he was alive, and made clear more by action than by speech all that he had seen and heard. For taking the vows immediately in the Cistercian Order, he was so strict with himself and so ruthless in chastising his body, that all who saw him could clearly understand that he had indeed experienced the pains of Purgatory, nay, rather those of hell.

Novice.—I should like you to make it plain to me, whether that place in which he was tormented, was within the bounds of hell or of Purgatory.

Monk.—If that valley was a part of hell, it is agreed that he must have made his confession without contrition. And this is clearly proved from this, that, by the testimony of the heavenly messenger, he underwent that punishment because he had consented to keep the stone.

Novice.—Must we say then that he consented to the devil?

Monk.—He did not consent so far as to do him homage, but he did consent in this, that he did not at once hurl the stone from him, but kept it carefully as a means of knowledge. Indeed he was so enamoured of it that not even in sickness did he at first lay it aside, but only with great reluctance cast it from him at the urgent bidding of the priest. If I should say that that place was in Purgatory, then I am confronted with these difficulties; first the absence of the holy angels, and then the presence of the demons and the fact that they carried off his soul at death, and were permitted to torment it so cruelly. Master Rudolph, the Scholasticus[1] at Cologne, whose school I used to frequent, taught us that no demon might ever touch the souls of the elect when they left their earthly prison, but that the blessed angels carried to the places of Purgatory all those that were worthy thereof. He used to illustrate it like this: It is not fitting that gold should be purified by a charcoal burner, but by a jeweller. Later, on account

[1] A canon charged with the direction of the schools.

of the sanctity of his life, he who had been thus recalled from death was made abbot in Morimond, one of our four chief houses, a man holy and devout in the sight of all. When I asked abbot Herman about him, whether he had ever seen him laugh, because it is said that those who have risen from the dead are never known to laugh, he answered: "Know that I myself was on the watch for this very thing, nor could I ever detect in him any inclination to levity, so serious was he and so gently patient. Never did I see him even smile, nor utter any trivial word."

Novice.—I wonder if he disclosed anything about the form or powers of the soul.

Monk.—Yes; he said that his soul was like a glassy spherical vessel, that it had eyes both before and behind, that it was filled with all knowledge, and nothing could escape its range of vision. He told the scholars all that they had been doing while they had been sitting round his bier, "you" he said "were playing dice: you were pulling each other's hair; and you were diligently chanting the psalms."

Novice.—I am glad to learn that this man, who put off his body and saw and heard so many things in pain, passed by all other Religious Orders of the Church and chose to enter ours.

Monk.—Rightly ought you to rejoice; and I will tell you another story that will greatly enhance this joy of yours.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of a dead clerk, who had been skilled in necromancy and who appeared to a living companion and persuaded him to enter the Order.

There were two young men in Toledo—as I have read, for the story was not told me by word of mouth—who used to study necromancy together, and it happened that one of them was seized with mortal illness; and when he was near to death, the other begged that he would appear to him within twenty

days. "Yes," he said, "I will, if permission be granted me." Now on that twentieth day the survivor was sitting in a church before the image of the Blessed Virgin, and reading psalms for the soul of his friend, when lo! that wretched one appeared, showing his torments by heartbreaking groans. And when he asked him where he was and how it fared with him, he replied; "Woe is me, for I am eternally lost on account of that diabolical art which I learnt: for it is the true death of the soul, as its title shows. And I counsel you, as my only friend, to give up this accursed science, and take up a Religious life and make amends to God for your sins." And when the living man begged him to show him the safest way of living, he replied, "There is no surer path than the way of the Cistercian Order; nor if you search through every way of life will you find any that furnishes fewer souls for hell than that Order." He told him much else which I omit for the sake of brevity, since they are all written in the book of the Visions of Clairvaux. In fine, the youth abjured necromancy without delay and became novice and then monk in the Cistercian Order.

Novice.—I admit that my heartfelt joy is doubled by this story.

Monk.—Will you hear about a third clerk who was converted in almost similar fashion?

Novice.—Indeed I very greatly desire it.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Also of a clerk who came to the Order after seeing the pains of the Landgrave Ludwig.

Monk.—From an aged brother of ours named Conrad, who has often told me the story, I learnt what I now relate. He is now nearly a hundred years old, and, being himself a native of Thuringia and having seen much service in arms before his conversion, knew a great deal about the life of the Landgrave Ludwig, of whom I told a long story above in the 27th

chapter. When he died, he left two sons as his heirs, namely, Ludwig, who died in the first expedition to Jerusalem which took place in the days of the Emperor Frederick, and Herman who succeeded him, and died only recently. This younger Ludwig, who was quite a reasonable and humane man, and to say truth a good deal less evil than most other of the petty tyrants of our day, put forth the following proclamation: "If there be any one," it ran, "who can give me true information about the soul of my father, with unmistakable evidence of its truth, I will bestow upon him a good farm."

This came to the ears of an impoverished knight, who had a brother clerk skilled in necromancy, to whom he pointed out the promises of the Landgrave; but he replied, "My dear brother, it is true that I once used to call up the devil by means of incantations; true also that I used to get from him any information that I desired; but for a long time now I have renounced all those arts, and all intercourse with him." But when the knight continued to urge him in season and out of season, reminding him of their poverty and the promised reward, the clerk was overcome at last by his brother's insistence, and summoned the demon. Immediately he appeared and asked what he wanted. The clerk answered: "I ask your pardon for having neglected you so long. Show me I pray you where dwells the soul of my master the Landgrave." Said the demon, "If you will come with me, I will show him to you." And he, "Much do I desire to see him, if I can do so without danger to my life." And the devil answered "I swear to you by the Most High, and by His awful tribunal, that if you will trust yourself to my good faith, I will take you there safely and bring you back unharmed." Then the clerk, taking his life in his hands for his brother's sake, climbed on to the shoulders of the demon, who quickly brought him to the gate of hell. Looking within, the clerk gazed upon those abodes of horror, where all manner of pains were being endured; and he saw there a demon of terrible aspect crouching over the closed mouth of a pit. At this sight the clerk was seized with a trembling in all his limbs: and that demon cried out to the demon who was carrying him: "Who is that

you have upon your back? Bring him here." And the other replied: "It is a friend of ours, and I have sworn by your mighty power that I will not hurt him, but will show him the soul of his lord the Landgrave and carry him back unharmed, that he may declare to all your measureless power."

Then he without further delay moved aside the flaming cover over which he was crouching, and putting a brazen trumpet into the opening, he blew upon it so loud a blast that the whole universe seemed to the clerk to become one vast blare. After what seemed to him an interval of an intolerably long hour, the pit all the while belching forth sulphurous flames, the Landgrave, rising amid the clouds of sulphurous sparks, put forth his head as far as the neck so that the clerk could see him and said: "See, I am here, that miserable Landgrave, once your master; Ah! would that I had never been born!" And the clerk made answer: "I have been sent by your son that I may carry him back word of your condition; and if it be possible to help you in any way, tell me that too, I beseech you." And he rejoined: "My condition you can see for yourself: but this I declare to you; that if my sons will restore to certain churches certain property (and here he recounted them by name) which I unjustly seized and left to them to inherit, they will confer great benefit upon my soul." And when the clerk said, "Sir, how shall they believe me?" he went on "I will give you a token unknown to any save my sons and myself." Then having received the token, and having seen the Landgrave plunged again into the pit, he was brought back to earth by the demon; and though he had escaped with his life, yet he came back so exhausted and so deathly pale that he was scarcely recognisable.

He carried the message of the father to the sons and told them the secret sign; but with little profit to the former Landgrave, for they refused altogether to make restitution. Nevertheless the Landgrave Ludwig said, "I recognise the sign and have no doubt that you did actually see my father, and I do not refuse to give you the promised reward." But he replied, "Sir, let your farm remain in your own hands; I must consider only what may benefit my soul"; and forsaking the world, he became a monk in the Cistercian Order,

glad to endure any kind of temporal suffering if only he might escape eternal doom.

Here you have three examples of how some are converted by the fear or sight of the pains of hell. I could tell you more about this, but I propose to refer to it again under other heads.

Novice.—If men could only see such things, surely they would not sin with so little thought.

Monk.—That is indeed true. Hear now the last example which shows how some are converted, not by the stings of conscience, but by the desire of preserving their innocence, and by the longing for their heavenly home.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of the conversion of Godfrey the monk of Villers, and of the revelations vouchsafed to him.

In the monastery of S. Panteleon in Cologne, which is of the Order of Black Monks, there was a youth who lived a blameless life of unsullied purity among his brethren according to the discipline of that Order. And this Godfrey, kindled with longing for the heavenly life, and finding that he could not live that life according to the injunction of his Rule, came to us and begged most humbly and earnestly that he might be counted worthy to join our convent. Our abbot, fearing that his desire arose more from fickleness than devotion, refused, alas! to receive him. Thus repulsed by us, he went to Villers and quickly obtained what he sought. How strict he was in all observances, how saintly in life, how fervent in his Order, God does not cease to show even to this day through the miracles wrought by his relics.

Once the lord abbot of Villers, who had been our Prior, came to visit us, and brought with him this venerable saint, and, as I have been told by those who saw him, God gave him at mass so great a grace of devotion, that the floods of tears from his eyes besprinkled both the altar and his own breast. And when father Lureke, who was then a novice

and had been a canon of Bonn, asked him how he ought to pray, he replied: "When you are at prayer, do not speak, but simply meditate upon the nativity, the passion, the Resurrection of the Saviour, and all else that you know about Him." For he longed to teach others what experience had shown to be profitable to himself. He possessed also the gift of prophecy, so that he would at times predict to the monks coming trials, and would urge them to prepare their hearts to endure them.

I will tell you also what a pious monk of Villers told me about him. Once during his week of office in the kitchen, he had been washing the feet of the monks, as is customary on a Saturday; and after compline, when he had closed the church, for he was sacristan, the Saviour appeared, girt with towel, and carrying a basin, and said to Godfrey, "Sit down that I may wash thy feet; for thou, for a long time, hast been accustomed to wash mine." And when he refused in terror, He constrained him, and kneeling down, He washed his feet, and so disappeared.

On a Tuesday in Holy week, when he was standing in his place in the choir, while the Psalm "Eructavit cor meum" (Ps. xlv.) was being fervently sung by the convent, lo! the glorious Virgin Mary, the mother of God, came down from the chancel, and went round the choir as the abbot does, blessing the monks, and so went out between the stalls of the abbot and the prior, as though she were going to the choir of the lay-brothers. He followed her to see where she went, but she was no more to be seen. And immediately, either the next day, or the day following, he fell sick: and though he was now nearing his end, he persevered in all the work of the convent until Easter, both lacerating his back with scourgings, and washing the sacred vestments with the others; but at length overcome by his illness, he was laid upon a bed in the infirmary.

And when the last agony was approaching, it happened to be the dinner hour of the convent, and his attendant said to him, "I do not like to go to dinner, for I fear you may die while I am away." "Go in peace," he said, "for I shall see you again before I die." And while the monk was

sitting at dinner, Godfrey opened the door of the refectory, looked at him, and passed on his way toward the church. The attendant was astounded, and thought that he had miraculously recovered his health. Immediately after the departure of Godfrey, the gong sounded to signify his death, and the monk remembered the promise the dying man had made him. When they stripped his body for the washing, they found his back so bruised with the blows of the rod, that all marvelled greatly. Not long ago, by revelation from on high, his bones were taken up and laid in the sanctuary, where they are preserved as relics.

To Him be the glory, who thus shows honour to them that turn to Him, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Many other stories are told of him, but I omit them for the sake of brevity.

Novice.—I confess myself completely satisfied as to the causes of conversion ; may I now hear something about its manner or form?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the manner and form of conversion.

Monk.—We see some come to conversion with a certain vanity and worldly ostentation, and others with a display of great humility.

Novice.—Which of these is better?

Monk.—No one can doubt that a humble conversion is pleasing to God; but indeed we must judge the display of any worldly ostentation according to the intention of the convert. Some who desire to be received dress themselves in new clothes, that they may not be repulsed as paupers and vagabonds; others again, though rich, put on the cloak of poverty, that their humility may make them the more worthy of admittance. I will give you examples of these.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of the conversion of the knight Walewan, who came to the Order in full armour.

A knight named Walewan, who desired to enter the convent, came to Hemmenrode arrayed in all his armour and riding upon his charger, and thus armed entered the convent: and, as our elders who were then present have told me, he went, under the guidance of the porter down the middle of the choir to the altar of the Blessed Virgin and there, with all the convent looking on, he laid down his arms and took up the monk's dress. It seemed to him to be fitting and proper that he should lay down the warlike trappings of the world there where he proposed to assume the garments of a soldier of Christ. He is still living, a good and earnest man, who at first was a novice among the monks, but afterwards, in his humility, preferred to become a lay-brother.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of the humble conversion of the abbot Philip.

The conversion of the abbot Philip of Ottirburg was the very opposite of this, as was related to me by a canon of Utrecht who was present at the time. Born of honourable parentage and canon of Cologne Cathedral he heard in Paris a lecture by Rudolph, a canon of the same Cathedral and president of the schools, and inspired by Divine grace, he left his studies without the knowledge of his master. Now he was a young man rather fastidious and always accustomed to be very well dressed; and meeting a poor scholar, he persuaded him to exchange clothes with him, and so came to a certain house of our Order called Bonnevaux, and humbly begged to be received there as a novice. The brethren, seeing him clad in an old and worn out cloak, thought that he was some wandering poor scholar, and refused to receive him. He felt the delay caused

by this repulse to be dangerous, and, when they still denied him entrance, he said at last: "If you do not let me in, perhaps you will one day be sorry, and then, when you wish to do it, it will be no longer possible." Then at last they took him in. When his master Rudolph heard of his conversion, he was much grieved and came with several companions to the monastery, but a house builded upon a rock cannot be shaken. And because this same Philip humbled himself at his conversion, the Lord so exalted him, that within a few years he was made abbot of that monastery.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Of some who at conversion conceal their Holy Orders for humility's sake.

So great is the virtue of humility that often for love of it, clerks who come to the Order conceal the fact that they are not laymen, preferring the herding of cattle to the reading of books, and holding it better to serve God in humility than to be set over others because of their holy orders or literary learning.

Now because it often happened in the Order that such men after being lay-brothers became monks, and it was considered desirable to prevent this for the future, four years ago it was laid down in a General Chapter that those who had taken the vows under such conditions should remain among the lay-brothers. The same year there came one—he was I think a deacon—who pretended to be a layman and was admitted as a lay-brother. And when the abbot learnt about his orders from some one who disclosed them, he brought forward his case at the next Chapter. And because it seemed to them as sensible men altogether absurd that one who had entered into such high orders should be without the mark of the tonsure and without the opportunity of exercising the functions of his orders, they reversed the decision.

Novice.—I am not surprised if some conceal their orders at conversion, when we read that in former days that women such as the blessed Eugenia and S. Euphrosyne and the blessed Marina, through their zeal for conversion, even concealed their sex.

Monk.—Why should you wonder at this which took place in former days, when we know it to have happened quite recently and in our own Order?

Novice.—I should very much like to hear all about that, namely, who she was, and where and how so wonderful a conversion took place (how she came to the Order, how she lived as a monk, and how she died).

Monk.—I will tell you faithfully about this woman, who she was, how she came to the Order, how she lived as a monk, and how she died, as the story was told to me by a monk who had been on probation with her as a novice.

CHAPTER XL.

Of the marvellous conversion of the blessed Virgin Hildegund who feigned to be a man.

In the town of Neuss, which is five miles from the great city of Cologne, there lived a citizen, who had a beautiful and beloved daughter named Hildegund. And when his wife died, and the child was still very young, he took her with him to Jerusalem, to pray at the Holy Sepulchre. On the way back the father fell ill, and at Tyre he died. On his deathbed he commended his daughter and all that he had to the care of his servant. But this man being both unscrupulous and greedy of money did not keep faith with his master, nor show any pity for the dead, but sailed away secretly by night, leaving the girl in the house, and abandoning her to misery and want.

In the morning when she rose and discovered that her faithless guardian had left the country, taking with him all her father's property, she was terribly distressed, for she knew not

what to do nor whither to turn. Not knowing the language of the country, she soon found herself without the means of living and was reduced to beggary; kind people however enabled her to attend the schools in that city for a year. After that time there arrived some pilgrims from Germany, to whom she explained the calamity that had befallen her, and prayed them with tears to have pity upon her. One of these, of noble birth and kind heart, and richer than the reſt, comforted her, and providing her with all necessaries, took the poor abandoned pilgrim upon his ship, and brought her back to her own country.

Now at that time a controversy was on foot in the Church of Tréves between two ecclesiaſtics who had been appointed to the bishopric, Wolmar the archdeacon, and Rudolph the chief provoſt; the former favoured by the lord pope Lucius and the latter by the Emperor Frederick. Now the Church of Cologne took the side of one of these parties, and on this account desired to send a letter to the Pope, who was then ſtaying in Verona. But the carrier, fearing for his life, because the ambushes set by the Emperor made it dangerous for anyone to carry letters to the Pope, and thinking this girl to be a young man, misled by her tonsure and dress, conceived the idea of making her his subſtitute. By prayers and promises of reward, and by assuring her that a traveller on foot would be much less an object of suspicion than one who went on horseback, he succeeded in persuading her to carry the letter enclosed in a ſtick.

When she was near the city of Augsburg, she fall in with a thief, who proposed that they should travel together, and she, unsuspicious of evil, willingly agreed. When they had gone a little way the thief heard a noise as of people pursuing them, and pretending that he was compelled to retire, he gave the girl his bundle containing the ſtolen goods, and hid himself in the thicket. To make the ſtory short, she was arreſted by the pursuers, dragged with the bundle before tribunal and sentenced to be hanged. When she found that nothing that she could say was of any profit, because of the ſtolen goods found upon her, she asked for and obtained the help of a prieſt. Confessing everything to him,

she told him very simply the whole object of her journey and the wickedness of the thief: and that she might induce him to believe her, she showed him the reed containing the letter to the Pope, and added, "If the thief be sought for, he will quickly be found."

By the advice of the priest, men with nets and dogs were sent to surround the wood; the thief was hunted and caught, and both were brought before the tribunal. When the wretched man was compelled by torture to confess his crime, he said, "I am unjustly forced to confess to a crime which I did not commit; the man who was taken in possession of the stolen goods ought by civil law to be the one condemned." On the other hand the girl said that the bundle had been treacherously entrusted to her, and that she wished to return it to its owner; whereupon he replied: "I deny that the bundle is mine; the assertion of one person is not evidence." To this the maiden could make no answer; but the priest intervening on her behalf, roundly asserted that she was innocent, and had been deceived by the man's cunning; "and if," he added, "you do not believe my words, make the trial by red hot iron, and it will quickly be shown which is innocent and which guilty." All agreed to the trial, and the hand of the thief was found to be burnt, and that of the girl to remain uninjured. Then the thief was hanged without further delay, and the confessor and deliverer of the maiden gladly gave her shelter in his own house.

And behold, at the instigation of the devil, who grudged the maiden her escape, a relation of the thief, furious at his dishonoured death, snatched away from the priest's house this innocent girl, who had been set free by the judgment of God, cut down the guilty man, and hanged her in his place. Without delay came the angel of God, who supported the innocent victim so that she felt not the constriction of the noose, and refreshed her with the wonderful sweet fragrance of his presence. Now while she felt no pain, but rather seemed to be enfolded in heavenly delight, she heard during that night so entrancing a melody, harmonies so varied and full of joy, that no choir of voices, no orchestra of strings could be compared to it in

sweetness. "What is it?" she asked, and the angel replied "These are the angelic songs amid which the soul of thy sister Agnes is being borne to heaven, and in two years from now thou thyself shalt blissfully follow her."

Thus the blessed maiden hung for two days, until some shepherds who were feeding their flocks in the neighbourhood were moved to pity, and agreed to take the body down and give it burial. But when the cord was cut, she did not fall down heavily as corpses do, but, the angel supporting her, came down slowly to the ground and stood there upon her feet, so that the shepherds fled in terror at such a sight. Then said the angel of the Lord: "Behold, thou art free; go withersoever thou wilt." To whom she replied: "My lord, it was my intention to go to Verona." Forthwith she was translated in a moment to the neighbourhood of that city, and the angel said, "Verona is three miles distant from this spot." Now between Augsburg and Verona is a distance of seven days journey.

Novice.—There seem to have been repeated on behalf of this maiden the ancient miracles of the saints like that of the abbot S. Benedict and the prophet Habakkuk, the former of whom, when far away, saw the soul of his sister Scholastica entering the highest heaven in the form of a dove; while the latter, the prophet I mean, was translated in a moment of time from Judæa to Babylon (Dan. xiv. 35. Vulgate).

Monk.—That is true, nor is it less wonderful that she at so great a distance should have found grace to hear the angelic song with which her sister was borne to heaven, than that the blessed Severin, when in Cologne, should have seen the soul of S. Martin ascending to the Lord with similar song. And to her, further, two glorious mercies were shown; one, that the angel upheld her so that she felt no pains from the noose, and the other, that he fortold to her the day of her death so long before.

But to continue; when she had finished successfully her undertaking at Verona, on her return she entered the diocese of Worms, and, full of gratitude for the Divine mercy, she succeeded, through the prayers and help of a certain venerable recluse, in being received as a novice by

Dom Theobald the abbot of Schoenau, that delightful place which derives its name from the pleasantness of its surroundings. The abbot, thinking her a man, bade her sit behind him on his horse; and when he heard the gentle feminine voice in which she spoke, said to her, "Brother Joseph, has your voice not yet broken?" and she answered, "Sir, I do not think it will ever break." Feigning to be a man, she had taken S. Joseph's name, so that as she had to fight against a two-fold enemy, the flesh and the devil, she might keep the more fully in mind him who she knew to have conquered these powerful foes, and gain his help the more completely.

When she entered upon her probation, she put her hand to the hardest tasks. She slept among men, with men she ate and drank, with men she bared her back to the scourge. And though she was a maiden of serious habit, yet that her sex might not be discovered, she sometimes made displays of levity among her companions on probation; as for instance, a monk named Herman, then a boy of 14, told me that once, when the master of novices was absent, she drew him to her cup and said, "Let us look into this mirror and see which of us is the more comely;" and while they were looking at the reflection of their faces in the wine, she said again, "Well, Herman, what do you think of my face?" He answered, "I think your chin is rather like the chin of a woman." Whereupon she went away as if in anger. Afterwards both were beaten for breaking the rule of silence.

Novice.—I wonder if she had any temptations while in the Order.

Monk.—Of her temptations I have heard nothing, but that she was the cause of temptation to others is quite clear. When the time named by the angel for her death drew near, her health began to fail, and when, owing to her extreme weakness they carried her to bed, one of the monks, looking at her, said aloud to the others standing by, "This brother of ours is either a woman or a devil, because I have never been able to look at her without temptation." The strength of nature is shown clearly enough by these words spoken in jest. The prior was summoned to her bedside, and when she had confessed to him a few trivial sins, he asked her if she

had ever sinned with any woman, and she replied, " Never, sir, have I been guilty with any woman, or any man;" adding the last words because of her sex. Then she told him in order, as I have been telling you, all that had befallen her in her life, but saying nothing about her sex. The prior was astounded and said, " My brother, what proof can you give me of all this, for it seems to me beyond belief," and she answered, " It is two years to-day since the angel of the Lord foretold to me the day of my death as I hung upon the gallows; *I know in whom I have believed. I have kept the faith, I have finished my course ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness* (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8). If on that day which I have foretold, I do not lay aside the use of my tongue for about the space of the saying of one mass before my death, do not believe me." And she added, " When I am dead, there will come to light a thing at which you will marvel greatly, and for which you will duly give thanks to the mighty power of God."

This she said, and at set of sun on the Wednesday in Easter week, the 20th of April in the year of the Lord, 1188, that saintly soul departed from her virgin body to be with the Lord. The gong was sounded, and the abbot and all the brethren hurried to be present at the prayers and rites for the dead, and when the body was carried out and stripped for the washing, her sex was made manifest. Then all were stupefied at the strangeness of the miracle, and it was told to the priest who was reading the commendatory prayers, who, when he heard of her sex, changed the words of the text, and substituted the words " nun " and " sister " for those of " monk " and " brother." Later, when her record was to be written for the books of the monastery, since her name was unknown, the entry was made in this fashion, " On the 20th of April died the handmaid of Christ in Schoenau."

Some days after, since the brethren desired to find out the name of that blessed one, they sent into the neighbourhood of Cologne, which she had given as the place of her birth, and after persistent enquiry for her family, by God's will an old woman was discovered who said that she had been a relation of hers, and that her name was Hildegund.

A few years ago, a new chapel was consecrated in Schoenau and the people came from various provinces to the ceremony, and when the virtues of the blessed Hildegund were related to them, they crowded to her tomb, especially the matrons, to commend themselves to her prayers, and to glorify God for such marvellous things. And let us, brethren, give thanks with them to our Saviour, who hath willed these things to take place in our time and in our Order to His glory and our edification, Who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

Let all men marvel at the life of him,
Of her, who lies within this tomb.
Living, she seemed a man, but death revealed
Her sex, for death makes plain what life can hide.
The Book of Life containeth " Hildegund."
She died on the 20th of April.

Novice.—About this maiden may indeed be understood that word of Solomon, " Who shall find a virtuous woman?"

Monk.—So great is the virtue of soul in some women, that they are indeed worthy of all praise.

CHAPTER XLI.

Of a widow of Cologne who went out from the city in the cloak of a lay-brother.

There was an honourable matron of Cologne, both rich and young, who after the death of her husband, desired to become the spouse of Christ, but was afraid of her friends, who sought to prevent her from carrying out her purpose. She consulted therefore Dom Charles, the abbot of Villers, and by his advice put on the cloak of a lay-brother, and in this dress was escorted out of the city by him and became a nun of the Hill of S. Walburgis.

Novice.—I am not so much surprised at the conversion of widows or married women who have tasted the dregs of the world, but I do greatly wonder at the constancy of virgins who take the veil in opposition to the will of their parents.

Monk.—I will give you some examples of these.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of the conversion of Matilda, abbess of Fusinnich.

The lady Matilda, who is to-day the abbess of Fusinnich, was the daughter of very rich parents and was brought up to make a worldly marriage. But while she was still of very tender years, she protested daily that she wished to be espoused to Christ alone, and to become a nun. Finding that she could not be turned aside from her purpose by either blandishments or threats, her parents dressed her up one day in purple garments against her will, and she said to her mother, "Even if you were to dress me all in gold, you would not make me change my mind." And when at last her parents gave up the struggle in weariness, they wished to place her in the aforesaid convent of S. Walburgis, but found it impossible, because the statutory number of sisters was already complete there. Wherefore she took the veil in Fusinnich, where she made such progress that she was soon chosen as abbess, though still a young woman. A few years later, her sister Aleidis, becoming a widow in early life, followed her and became prioress in the same convent. By their example, one of their relations, going out of the diocese of Utrecht in man's clothes through fear of her parents, took the veil in the convent of S. Thomas, which is a house of our Order in the diocese of Trèves. But when her sister tried to do the like, she was seized by her parents and given to a husband; nevertheless, I hope that God will not leave unrewarded so fervent a desire for conversion.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Of the conversion of Helswindis, abbess of Burscheid.

I will tell you the ſtory of the conversion of the lady Helswindis, the abbess of Burscheid, a conversion that was worthy of all praise and indeed of wonder. She was and ſtill is the daughter of Arnold, bailiff of Aix, a rich and powerful man, and from an early age so glowed with zeal for conversion, that she used frequently to say to her mother, "Mother, let me be a nun." She was in the habit of going with her mother to the Hill of S. Saviour, where at that time there was a convent of the ſiſters of Burscheid.

One day she entered the house secretly by the kitchen window, went up to the dormitory, and putting on a ſiſter's cowl, went in to the choir with the others. When her mother, now wishing to return, learnt of this from the abbess, she, thinking it a practical joke, said, "Please send for my servant, for we muſt be going home." Whereupon the daughter speaking at the window from within, said, "I am a nun, I cannot come with you." But the mother, in fear of her husband, answered, "Come with me now, and I will ask your father to make you a nun"; and so she went with her mother. But she, when she got home, failed to keep her promise and said nothing to her husband.

Later it happened one morning that the mother again went up the Hill, leaving her daughter ſtill asleep. When she woke and sought for her mother, and could not find her, she guessed that she had gone to the Hill and followed alone; arriving, she entered the convent by the same window, and again put on the habit, and when her mother called her to come away, she replied, "You shall not deceive me again," and reminded her of the promises made before.

And the mother went home much frightened, and her father in great anger came up with her brothers, broke down the doors, took away his daughter in spite of her cries and tears, and handed her over to some of his relations to turn her mind away from all ideas of conversion. But though she was I

think no more than nine years old, she answered all their arguments with such wisdom as to astonish and confound them. What need of more? The bishop of Liège excommunicated the father and those who had helped to carry her away; she was restored to the convent, and after a few years was chosen abbess.

Let this be enough about conversion. Many wonders of this kind has Christ wrought in His elect to the glory of His Name, to Whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be honour and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

BOOK II

OF CONTRITION

CHAPTER I.

Of contrition, what it is, and why it is so called, what are its different kinds, and what is its fruit.

In the first book it was stated that conversion sometimes goes before contrition and sometimes follows it, and this was proved by examples. Now indeed I propose to speak about this contrition, according as the Lord shall deign to give me grace, and I shall confirm with illustrations all that I shall say of it.

And this you ought to know, that contrition is a great and perfect good, since it is the gift of God, " coming down from above from the Father of light, with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning " (Jam. i. 17). And sometimes there are even additions to its perfectness, for while the least contrition wipes out the greatest sin, a perfect contrition takes away both sin and penalty.

Novice.—That I may be able the better to understand the power of contrition, will you explain to me first what it really is, why it is so called, whether it is bestowed as a free gift, or by a man's merit, how many kinds there are of it, and what it works in the sinner?

Monk.—Contrition is heartfelt repentance, i.e., grief for sin, arising sometimes from the fear of hell, sometimes from the desire of heaven.

Novice.—Is there any difference between repentance and penance?

Monk.—Yes; repentance is the inward pain that takes away guilt; penance is the outward satisfaction that wipes out the penalty due to the sin.

Novice.—What is the difference between guilt and penalty?

Monk.—Guilt is the sin itself, the penalty is the reward of guilt. If the sin be mortal, the reward due is eternal punishment, which upon heartfelt repentance, God commutes into a temporal punishment, and this, if the contrition has been imperfect, is cancelled by external satisfaction, which is called penance, so called because the word contains the meaning of punishment.

Novice.—Whence comes its name?

Monk.—Contrition is so called because it is complete trituration or bruising; it is made up of *con,* which means complete, and *tritio,* because the heart ought to be bruised with grief for all sin. If a man grieve for one sin and not for another, it must by no means be allowed that such a man has contrition of the heart. The sinner cannot divide his guilt any more than God divides His pardon; for He forgives the whole debt at once.

Novice.—If we must be contrite for all sins at once, what does the Psalmist mean when he says, " Every night wash I my bed and water my couch with my tears " (Ps. vi. 6). The " bed," as you have often explained, is the conscience, and " every night " is every sin. If he bemoans them one by one that so they may be washed away one by one, how can he show contrition for all at once?

Monk.—There ought to be one general contrition for all sins, to wipe out the guilt; and then, if it be possible, we should weep each day with Thais, to wash away the penalty.

Novice.—From whence does contrition arise? Is it a free gift, or is it the result of man's desert?

Monk.—I will tell you what is the opinion of our forefathers about this. They say that there are four concurrent agents in the justification of a sinner: the infusion of grace, the emotion that rises from grace and freewill, contrition, and the remission of sins. These four they call the four justifications. The first we can never deserve, because it is bestowed on us as a free gift, nor do we deserve the second, because

it is an emotion immediately aroused by grace and freewill. Although we have no desert in that emotion, nevertheless by it we do deserve the third justification, that is, contrition. This justification does come by our effort, and by it we can win the fourth, namely, remission of sins. That is the limit of desert in contrition. And you must bear in mind that one justification is said to precede another, not in time, but in its nature.

Novice.—I should like you to explain this more fully under some figure.

Monk.—Consider this then. Rain is bestowed upon the earth, and from both elements the plants grow, and then from the plant fruit is produced. The rain is grace, the earth is freewill; from rain and earth comes the plant, and from grace and freewill springs emotion, as we have said. The plant bears fruit, when this emotion moves freewill to give satisfaction. The soil is barren without the rain, and freewill can bear no fruit without grace; neither can the rain work without the soil.

Novice.—What are the different kinds of contrition?

Monk.—There are two, namely, the inward and the outward ; the inward in betterness of heart, the outward in discipline of body.

Novice.—Now I am wondering, what is the mighty power of contrition?

Monk.—So great is its power, that without it, baptism bears no fruit, confession is barren, reparation is useless, in adults who have added actual to original sin. Here then you understand that contrition is the first baptism to the unbaptised, and to the baptised who have fallen into sin, it is their second baptism. By this baptism of contrition were baptised the thief on the cross, and S. Mary Magdalene at the Saviour's feet.

That contrition blotteth out sin, however great that sin may be, you shall learn by the following illustration.

CHAPTER II.

Of the apoſtate monk, who being mortally wounded in fighting, in the contrition of his confeſſion, choſe for himſelf 2,000 years in Purgatory.

A certain youth of noble birth took the vows in our Order. One of his relations was a certain bishop who loved him dearly, who, when he heard of his conversion, came to the monaſtery and tried his utmoſt to persuade him to return to the world, but failed. When his year of probation was fulfilled he was made monk, and passing through the different ſteps, was not long afterwards ordained prieſt.

Under the temptation of the devil, who drove the firſt man out of Paradise, he forgot his vows, forgot his prieſthood, and worſt of all, forgot his Maker, and deserted from the Order ; and because he was ashamed to return to his parents, he joined a band of robbers or freebooters. So utterly was he given over to a reprobate mind, that he who before had surpassed the good in goodness, now outdid the wicked in wickedness.

It happened that at the siege of a certain caſtle he was wounded with a javelin very grievously and drew near to death. His comrades carried him away to a place of safety, and sent for doctors to attend him. And since there was no hope of escaping temporal death, they exhorted him to confession, that he might by that means escape the death eternal. But he answered them, " What profit can confession be to me, who have wrought so many and great evils, who have committed such enormous crimes? " And they replied, " The mercy of God is greater than your iniquity can be."

At laſt with difficulty overcome by their persiſtence, he said, " Call the prieſt." When at their summons he came and sat by the side of the sick man, the merciful God who is able to take away the heart of ſtone and give a heart of flesh, gave him such heartfelt contrition, that often he began his confession, and as often his voice failed him for his sobs and tears. At length he gathered courage and broke out into these words : " Sir, my sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; I was a Ciſtercian monk and was ordained prieſt in the Order, which at the call of my sins, I deserted:

nor was it enough for me to apoſtatise, but I joined a band of freebooters, and surpassed them all in cruelty, for while they took men's goods, I robbed them of life itself. My eye had pity on none. If sometimes they, touched with human pity, were willing to spare, I, driven by the wickedness of my heart, spared none who came into my power. The wives and daughters of many I violated, and vaſt numbers of homes I committed to the flames"; and went on to enumerate many other enormities almoſt beyond the limits of human wickedness.

The prieſt, after hearing such a confession, was terrified by the enormity of his sins, and being a dull and ſtolid man, stolidly said, "Your iniquity is too great for you ever to hope for pardon." He replied, "Sir, I am an educated man; often have I both heard and read that no human sin can be compared with the infinity of the Divine compassion. I beg you therefore by the promise of Divine mercy that you will deign to assign me some penance." And the prieſt, "I know not what penance to assign you, for you are a loſt soul." The monk replied, "Sir, since I am unworthy to receive a penance from you, I will assign one to myself, and I choose 2,000 years in purgatory, in the hope that after them I may find mercy in the sight of God." Since truly he had been caught between the upper and the nether millſtones, the fear of hell and the hope of glory.

Novice.—Why did he choose a term so long drawn out?

Monk.—Because he thought upon the greatness of his sins, and reckoned any penalty measurable by time as a mere nothing in comparison with an eternity of woe. He said again to the prieſt, "Though you deny me the medicine of penance, I entreat you not to refuse me the viaticum of Holy Communion." Stolidly the prieſt replied, "If I have not dared to assign you a penance, how can I presume to give you the Body and Blood of Chriſt?" And when he would accede to neither of these petitions, the dying man made at laſt this ſtrange requeſt: "I wish you to write an account of my case, and send it to a relation of mine, Bishop ——," mentioning his name, "and I truſt that he will pray for me." The prieſt promised, and the monk died, and his soul was carried to

purgatory. The priest then went to the bishop, taking with him the papers concerning the deceased. And when he had read them, he wept most bitterly and said to the priest: "Never did I love a man so dearly; I grieved when he took the vows, I grieved when he broke them, I grieve for his death. I loved him alive, and I shall still love him. Because he can still be helped, and because he died in contrition, he shall not lack the prayers of the Church." And calling together the prelates of his diocese, to wit, the deans, the priors, the incumbents of churches, and all to whom a care of souls had been committed, and making the same request to all the nuns in the convents, he besought them all with much humility and urgency, speaking to those present and writing to the absent, that they would for that year use the special prayers which he provided for them for the soul of the dead man, both at mass and at all other offices. He himself, besides the alms and special prayers that he offered for him, daily offered the saving victim for the absolution of his friend's soul. Moreover, if by chance it happened through any overwhelming necessity or through illness that he himself was prevented from carrying out this duty, he found others to take his place.

When the year was over, at the close of the last mass, the dead man appeared to the bishop, pale, worn and emaciated, and clad in sad-coloured garment, plainly declaring his condition by appearance and dress. And when the bishop asked him how he fared and whence he came, he replied, "I am in pains and from pains I come; but I give thanks to your charity, because this year of your alms and prayers and of the goodness shown to me by your flock has delivered me from 1,000 years of the pains I had to endure in purgatory. Moreover, if you will still give me similar help for another year, I shall be altogether set free." On hearing this, the bishop rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and sending letters to the churches and monasteries telling them all the vision, he obtained from them that they would continue the appointed prayers for that year also. The bishop himself repeated his urgency of the preceding year, with all the greater fervency as now he was the surer of his kinsman's deliverance.

At the close of the second year, when the bishop was celebrating the last mass in his behalf, he appeared again, but now clad in a snow-white robe, and with a countenance of tranquil serenity, and related how all his desires were fulfilled and said, "May the Almighty God reward you, most holy father, for that loving care by which I have been delivered from all the pains of purgatory, and now enter into the joy of my Lord. For behold, these two years have been allowed to stand for me in place of the whole 2,000 years." And he saw him no more.

Novice.—This is indeed a joyful ending. But there are two things that especially excite my awe and wonder: the first is the power of contrition, by which he who deserved damnation became worthy of eternal life, and the other the power of prayer which so swiftly delivered him from purgatorial pain.

Monk.—Although there is of a truth great might in each, yet the greater is seen in contrition. For the prayers and alms of the Church cannot gain the essential blessing. They were able indeed to lessen the pains of the dead, but they had no power to increase his ultimate happiness.

Novice.—I wonder too that an apostate, dead and buried in secular dress, should have appeared in the garb of a monk.

Monk.—Contrition turned the apostate into the monk, and the secular dress into the gown.

Novice.—I pray you show me this by a still more evident example.

Monk.—Here is one ready to hand.

CHAPTER III.

Also of an apostate monk, who was rendered contrite by a miracle of S. Bernard, died outside the Order, and was buried in the dress of a clerk, and when his body was exhumed, it was found tonsured and clad in the gown of a monk.

The blessed Bernard, as was related to me by a certain monk, who was also a priest, had a monk in whom God has

shown very plainly an answer to this question of yours about the power of contrition. Many stories have been told, though none written down, about him by the older men amongst us, some of whom are still alive. This monk, by the persuasion of the evil one, laid aside his gown and undertook the government of a certain parish, for he was a priest, the same enemy aiding him. And since sin is often punished by more sin, the deserter from the Order fell into the further vice of lust. He took a concubine to live with him, as is the custom of many, by whom also he begat children. After many years it happened, in the mercy of God, who willeth that none should perish, that the holy abbot passed through the town where this monk was living, and turned aside to his house for hospitality. He, well knowing the abbot, received him with as much reverence as if he had been his own father, and ministered to his wants with great devotion, and provided abundantly not only for him but also for his retinue and horses; and yet he was not recognised by the abbot.

In the morning after matins had been said, the saint was ready to continue his journey, but was unable to speak with the priest, because he had risen earlier and gone to the church; so he said to the priest's son, "Go and take the message to your master." Now the boy had been dumb from his birth, and he obeyed the command because he felt within him the authority of him who bade him go, ran to his father, and in his own words expressed exactly the words of the holy father, saying, "This and this is the message the abbot sends you." The father, hearing his son speak for the first time, urged him to repeat the same words over and over again, and then diligently enquired what the abbot had done to him: "He did nothing to me, but only said, 'Go and give this message to your master.'" The priest was pricked to the heart by so evident a miracle, and, hastening to the saint, threw himself before his feet weeping. "My lord and father," he said, "I was your monk so and so, and I left your monastery at such a time. I therefore beseech your fatherliness that I may be allowed to return with you to the monastery, because God hath touched my heart by your

coming." To whom the saint replied, "Wait here for me, and when I have finished my business, I will quickly return and will take you with me." He, fearing death as he had never feared it before, answered, "Sir, I fear that I may die while you are gone." But the abbot said, "Hold this for certain, that if you were to die in this contrition and with this purpose, you would be found a monk in the sight of God."

He went and returned, and heard that the priest had recently died and had been buried. Whereupon he ordered that the tomb should be opened; and when they asked him why, he replied, "I wish to see whether it is a monk or clerk that lies there." "It was a clerk," they said, "whom we buried in secular dress." The earth was thrown aside, and he appeared to all, not in the secular dress in which he was buried, but in the tonsure and habit of a monk; and all glorified God, who takes the will for the deed. See how you have here a clear proof that in the sight of God true contrition restores all that has been lost by the sin of apostasy. Yet know this also, that all the years of apostasy were barren years.

Novice.—Well do I recognise, from all you have said, the power of contrition, but still more do I marvel at the ineffable mercy of the Saviour. That man was an apostate, was a fornicator, and, what I count far worse, did not scruple to handle daily with his polluted hands the most sacred mysteries of Christ.

Monk.—You are rightly troubled by this. Where the contempt is greater, the guilt is heavier. If he who has approached unworthily, i.e., being in some mortal sin, is worthy of a punishment like that due to those who crucified the Christ (1 Cor. xi. 27), what are we to think of him, who, abiding in many and continual sins, not only eats without eating, but even prepares and handles that great Sacrament with guilty hands? Hear what father Cæsarius, one of our monks and formerly abbot of Prüm, told me.

CHAPTER IV.

Of a priest who said, if sins are sins, never can my soul be saved.

Once, he said, when I was talking with a priest about sins, he, not as confessing but as making light of them, replied, "If sins are, as men say, really sins and so grievous, never can my soul be saved." "Why?" he asked. "Because this last night I have slept with the lawful wife of so and so, and to-day I have celebrated three masses; and further, in that very night there was a double festival, that of the Sunday and of S. Laurence the martyr.

Novice.—These are terrible things that I hear; and I marvel that God can endure patiently such sins as against Himself.

Monk.—If God were to slay sinners in the act of sinning, there would be very few monks alive to-day. Will you then hear about a priest, a very terrible case of this kind, in which you may stand awe struck before the unspeakable patience of God?

Novice.—Very much do I desire it, for indeed the Divine patience is very necessary for us all.

CHAPTER V.

Of a libidinous priest, and how on Christmas Day a dove three times took away, and, after his contrition, restored the Sacrament of the altar.

Dom Conrad, formerly bishop of Halberstadt, told us last year of a remarkable occurrence, which he said had taken place a few years ago in France. There was a priest who on Christmas Eve had to make a short country walk in going from one village to another to say matins, and celebrate masses according to custom. As he drew near to the second village, he being quite alone, met by the agency of the devil,

a woman also quite alone; and thus alone, with no eye to see them, they sinned. Though he had incurred such heinous guilt, his accusing conscience did not save him from a yet greater act of contempt, but fearing rather the scorn of men than the vengeance of God, he entered the church, and after saying matins, he duly began, as usual, the mass which is said at cockcrow. When the Transubstantiation took place, when, that is, the bread became the Body and the wine the Blood of Christ, a snow-white dove descended upon the altar, under the eyes of the priest, and after drinking the whole contents of the chalice, took the host in its beak and flew away. Seeing this the priest was terrified, though not yet enough for his soul's health, and was no little perplexed as to what he should do; yet on account of the congregation present, he finished the canon as to words and actions, though the fruit of the canon was not there. After mass came lauds, and after lauds, the morning mass, which he took, because there was no substitute available; and again, at the same moment as before, came the dove which again took away the Sacrament and withdrew.

Novice.—Why did he not drive it away, after the example of the patriarch Abraham (Gen. xv. 11)?

Monk.—It was not such a dove as could be driven away or interfered with. I think rather it was of the nature of that dove which John saw on the Jordan, hovering over the head of Jesus (Matt. iii. 16).

Novice.—What are we to think of that dove? Was it the Holy Spirit?

Monk.—No indeed; but it was the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. For when its work was accomplished, for which it had been created by the Holy Spirit, it was resolved into its former elements. The Divine Nature cannot be seen with the eyes of the body, nor heard with the ears, nor touched with the hands; yet it may be sometimes made visible in some subject creature, such as the fire or the dove.

Novice—What did the priest do then?

Monk.—Even then he did not cease from his presumption but came to the altar for the third time to celebrate the mid-day

mass, and for the third time the Holy Child, who was born as on that day, by the means of that same dove, took away the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. And now at last, unworthy as he was, the grace of God restored the unhappy man to his senses and pierced his heart with sorrow for his sin. He came to an abbot of our Order and made a full confession; with many tears he laid before him the whole matter from beginning to end, telling him how, to his utter shame, he had been three times repulsed from the divine Sacrament.

Now the abbot was a wise and prudent man, and believed him to be truly contrite; but wishing to make trial of the depth of his contrition, he did not at once lay any penance upon him, but ordered him to go immediately and celebrate mass. He, obeying his confessor as if he were God, went trembling and weeping to the altar to celebrate, and the merciful Lord, *who abhorreth nothing that He hath made* and *winketh at the sins of men for contritions sake* (Wisd. xi. 24, 25. Vulg.) made glad his heart in wonderful guise. For before the time of reception, the dove returned, bringing in its beak the three Hosts which it had taken one by one, and laid them upon the corporal, and from its throat poured into the chalice the liquor of the three masses, and so departed. When he saw this, the priest was filled with unspeakable joy and gave thanks to God, " who only doeth great wonders " (Ps. cxxxvi. 4). Coming back to the abbot, he recounted to him this Divine consolation, and humbly implored that he would receive him into his monastery. The abbot replied: " I will not take you now, but I wish you to cross the sea, and as penance for your sins minister to the sick in the hospitals for three years. If then you come back, you shall suffer no repulse from me." For he wished that, by the toil of so great a journey and by the perils of the sea, he should pay the penalty of his sin, and by his works of mercy win the sick and poor to pray for him. He carried out the abbot's injunction and after three years came back, and took the gown of a monk in the monastery.

Novice.—It was a happy sin, to be the occasion of so great a sinner gaining so great a blessing.

Monk.—A mortal sin may be altogether vile in itself, yet sometimes it becomes good, *i.e.* profitable to some by the opportunity it brings. Sometimes through fear of one sin a man is delivered from many, yes indeed from all sins; for while he fears the imminent penalty, he confesses and repents, and by his repentance is delivered from all.

Novice.—I readily grant what you say ; because if I see one foul spot on my gown, the occasion of this leads me to wash the whole gown.

Monk.—This however must be remembered, that sometimes God forgives mortal sins without forgiving some that are venial ; but He does not forgive a venial sin without also forgiving any that is mortal.

Novice.—I do not understand how this can be.

Monk.—There are some venial sins, such as the two great affection of parents for their children, for which they cannot grieve, nor can they put them away, and therefore they are not forgiven in this present life. But whatever may be done with regard to such venial sins, let a prudent man be on his guard against mortal sins, because while he can fall without the aid of any, he cannot rise again of his own strength. Who can tell if God will deign to stretch out to the lapsed a helping hand, *i.e.,* His illuminating grace? Some fall, as Judas, and never rise again; others, like Peter, and rise again stronger than before.

I will tell you most true examples of this, which ought to be the more acceptable to you, as they are the more recent.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the impenitent murderer, Hildebrand, and of his punishment after death.

Brother Bernard, our fellow monk, told me about a rich man's bailiff, who fell very grieviously, and after his fall refused to rise again; and perhaps the reason that he refused was that he was unable. In truth he was unable, because

there was no gift of contrition in his heart. The man's name was Hildebrand, and he lived in a village called Holchoim in the diocese of Utrecht. One day he went into a wood with a fellow citizen, whom, at the instigation of the devil, he killed when they were quite alone. There had been quarrels between them formerly, but at that time they seemed to be perfectly good friends. When Hildebrand came back to the town, he was asked by the friends of the murdered man where he was, and he answered that he did not know. They waited for him that day and next, and when he did not come (for indeed he could not), they suspected Hildebrand because of their former quarrels, and brought him before the judge for trial on the charge of murder. He denied the charge timidly, but his very look betrayed him, and when pressed he could no longer deny, but confessed that he had killed the man. Sentence was forthwith passed upon him, and he was condemned to be broken on the wheel.

When he was being led out to death, a priest of the same commune named Bertolf, with another priest called John, who was the blood-brother of the aforesaid brother Bernard, bailiff of the village, drew him aside, as having once been an honest man, and diligently urged him to confession and contrition. But because the unhappy man was unable to rise again of himself, and felt no hand helping him, he replied miserably: "What use can such things be to me: I am a man already doomed." And the priest said to him, I adjure you by the Father, Son and Holy Ghost that within the next 30 days you appear to me without endangering my life and tell me of your state." He answered, "If I am allowed, I will willingly do this." And so he suffered the penalty of the wheel, and passed from torment of the body to the torment of eternal damnation.

One night within the appointed time, Bertolf was asleep in bed, when there arose so great a crashing of the trees around his house, with such violent gusts of wind, that the very animals were terrified, and could scarcely be kept within their stalls by their halters. Bertolf waking from sleep turned his eyes to the entrance of the house, and lo! the doors, as if driven in by the force of the wind, were opened, and he saw

Hildebrand enveloped in glowing fire and swiftly approaching him. Terrified beyond measure, he crossed himself and bade him in the Name of God to come no further. "See, here I am, according to my promise," he said; and when the other asked him how he fared, he answered, "I am eternally damned, being appointed to everlasting burnings chiefly because of my despair. If I had followed your advice and shown penitence, I should have escaped eternal punishment at the price of temporal death; for God does not punish twice for the same offence. But know this, that if when alive I had not been adjured not to injure you when dead, I should have come here to your hurt. I counsel you to amend your life, that after death you may not suffer a punishment like mine." For this Bertolf was a priest only in name, not in fact. For up till then he had been in the habit of celebrating mass without having received the order of priesthood. And when he wished to ask more of the unhappy soul, he replied: "I may not stay here longer, for there are many demons outside waiting for my return. And having said this, he was straightway driven forward and out with a mighty shrieking and wailing, and so departed from him. Later, as he passed the stable door the horses, as before showed terror and affright.

Bertolf, then, terrified by so dreadful a vision, forsook the world, and took the Religious dress in a house of our Order, called Harthausen. The abbot of that monastery, having discovered that he was a man of good education and considerable eloquence, sought long to persuade Pope Innocent to allow him to be ordained, but without success. Two years ago, as the prior of Kloster-Camp told me, he was afflicted by the disease, called anthrax, in the hand which he had without warrant put out to touch the ark of God. The hand thus affected was amputated, as the only remedy to prevent the disease from spreading, but this was of no avail, indeed it was only an additional torment, and rather hastened his death. I hope and think that it was God's will to punish him in this life, that He might spare him hereafter.

You see how that steward fell, and never rose again. If he had not fallen, assuredly he would have escaped eternal loss.

Novice.—By this man's punishment it is made clear how perilous it is to remain in mortal sin.

Monk.—You must know that it is not only perilous but ruinous. It is perilous, because as acute fever is near to death, so is a mortal sin near to hell; it is ruinous, because whatever good the sinner may do in that state is wholly lost and gains nothing of eternal reward.

Novice.—I should like to ask further, whether his fall ensued from the guilt of the sinner, or on the opportunity offered by the withdrawal of grace?

Monk.—Never is grace withdrawn from any man, except as a consequence of guilt; otherwise the sin would justly be flung back upon God, the author of grace.

Novice.—Thank you.

Monk.—Would you like to hear now about another unhappy wretch, who with his own eyes saw the penalty due to his guilt made ready for him in hell, and yet when he came back from the Inferno, thought scorn of the need of penitence.

Novice.—Yes, indeed.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Gottschalk the usurer, who saw a seat of fire prepared for him in hell.

Monk.—When Master John, Scholasticus of Xanten, and Master Oliver, Scholasticus of Cologne were preaching the Crusade against the Saracens in the diocese of Utrecht, as I was told by the aforesaid brother Bernard, who at that time was Oliver's colleague and assistant preacher, there was a certain peasant named, if I remember rightly, Gottschalk, who made a business of usury. This man took the cross with the rest, not from devotion, as was afterwards clear, but because he was driven to it by the urgent pressure of those around him. When the Pope's dispensators, by Innocent's order, were collecting the money for the redemption of their vow from those who were too old or too infirm or too poor to go, this same usurer, falsely protesting that he was a poor

man, gave to one of the dispensators a sum of about five marks, and by such a pretence cheated the priest. His neighbours certified afterwards that he could have given forty marks, without disinheriting his children, as he pretended. But God, who is not mocked, brought his deceit to a terrible ending. The wretch used to sit in the taverns, provoking God, and taunting His pilgrims in this fashion: "You fools," he would say, "are going to cross the sea, and waste your substance, and expose your lives to all kinds of dangers, while I, for the five marks with which I redeemed my vow, shall stay at home with my wife and children, and get as good a reward as you." But the God of justice, that He might show openly how favourably He looked upon the toil and expenditure of the pilgrims, and how evil in His sight were the craft and blasphemy of their reviler, delivered the wretched man to Satan that he might learn not to blaspheme.

One night when he was sleeping by his wife, he heard in his own mill, which adjoined his house, a noise like that of the wheel turning. He called to his servant and asked him, "Who has set the mill going? Go and see who is there." The lad went out and returned for he was too much overwhelmed with terror to go in. "Who is there?" cried his master. "Such awful horror came over me at the door," he replied, "that I was compelled to turn back." And he: "Even if the devil himself be there, I will go and see." And throwing his cloak over his shoulders, for he was undressed, he went to the mill, opened the door and looked in, and saw a dreadful sight. Standing there were two coal-black horses, and by them a mis-shapen attendant of the same coal-black hue, who cried to the peasant: "Quick! mount this horse; it has been brought for you." Pale and trembling he shuddered to hear this word of command. And seeing him unwilling to obey, the devil cried again: "Why do you hesitate? throw off that cloak and come." For on the cloak was sewn the crusader's cross, which he had taken. What need of more? Feeling in his despairing heart the power of the devil's summons, and no longer able to resist, he threw off the cloak, entered the mill and mounted the horse, which was itself a devil. The attendant demon mounted the other,

and with incredible swiftness both were borne from one abode of pain to another. There the wretched man saw his father and mother in most miserable plight, and many others, of whose death he was quite unaware. There too he saw an honoured knight, Elias of Rheineck, burgrave of the city of Horst, who had died recently; he was mounted upon a heifer, mad with rage, with his face toward her tail; and while she rushed hither and thither, she gored his back with continual blows of her horns. When the usurer approached him and asked: "Sir, why do you endure so great pains?" he answered: "This heifer I took without pity from a widow woman, and so without pity I must endure these pains from her horns." There too was shown him a burning fiery chair, no place for peaceful rest, but a home of pain, unending pain; and he heard a voice saying: "You will be taken back now to your house, but after three days you will put off your body, and your soul will return to your own place, and seated in that chair, you will receive your reward."

Then he was taken back by the demon, and put down in the mill, and left there half dead. He was found by his wife and servants and carried to his bed; and when they asked him where he had been, he replied: "I was carried off to the place of hell, and such and such things did I see, and my guide showed me there a seat which he said was prepared for me, and that after three days I should receive my due reward therein." The priest was summoned in haste, and the wife begged him to calm his terrors, to deliver him from despair and to exhort him to the way of salvation. But when the priest urged him to contrition for his sins, and to make an honest confession, assuring him that none need despair of the mercy of God, he replied, "What use to say that? I cannot repent, I believe it useless to confess. What is appointed for me must be fulfilled. My place is prepared for me; in three days I must go thither, and there receive the due reward of my deeds."

And so without contrition, without confession, without viaticum or unction, on the third day he died, and in hell was buried. At first the priest refused to give the Church's burial, but the wife bribed him, and he was laid in the

cemetery. For this the priest was afterwards accused before the Synod of Utrecht, and was duly punished. It is scarce three years since all this happened.

See how this man, like the other fell and never rose again.

Novice.—There seems to me some significance in the fact that the knight received his punishment upon the maddened heifer, and the usurer in a chair which is significant of rest and stability.

Monk.—God punishes the sinner according to the nature and manner of his sin. The knight, who took the heifer by violence, expiates his crime upon the heifer. This is in accordance with the nature of the sin; the heifer runs through meadow after meadow, in his search for pasture, and by her continual grazing keeps short the growing grass. The heifer, in her restlessness, and in the way she continually *feeds down* the grass, is a type of the nobles and rulers of our time, who *feed down* the houses and farms of their subjects by demanding hospitality; and, by their perpetual exactions, do not suffer their substance to grow again. In their punishment they shall be like two robbers, and, as they now harry others, so shall they themselves be harried with the knight of whom the story tells. Let this be enough about the manner. But the usurer, because he gives out his money to usury, while he himself sits quietly at home, received his chair of fire in hell. And rightly is that chair a chair of fire, because as the fire consumes the stubble, so does usury devour the substance of the poor.

CHAPTER VIII.

How grievous is the sin of usury.

Novice.—Usury seems to me a very grievous sin, and one most difficult to cure.

Monk.—You are right. Every other sin has its periods of intermission; usury never rests from sin. Though its master be asleep, it never sleeps, but always grows and climbs.

It is difficult to heal, for God does not forgive the guilt of theft unless the thing ſtolen be reſtored. The fornicator, the adulterer, the murderer, the perjurer, the blasphemer, all receive forgiveness from God, as soon as they show contrition for their sin; but the usurer, although he may be sorry for his sin, does not obtain pardon, so long as he keeps the fruit of the usury when he might reſtore it.

Novice.—What if he have already spent the money thus gained, or given it to his children, keeping nothing but his own lawful possessions?

Monk.—These he is bound to sell that he may reſtore that which was gained unlawfully.

Novice.—There are so many usurers to-day, because the bishops, who are set over the church as watchmen, give communion to them, and give them Chriſtian burial.

Monk.—If they only concealed the vices of their flocks and did not imitate them, it would be bearable. Some bishops to-day make as grievous exaćtions from those committed to their charge, as if they were mere secular rulers. These are " evil, very evil, pigs " (Jer. xxiv. 3). It is much to be feared that such bishops are preparing for themselves thrones by the side of the usurer's chair in hell, for usury and violent exaćtions are nothing else than robbery and plunder.

Novice.—How can the limbs be healthy when the head is so diseased?

Monk.—This seat reminds me of a parable once told by a certain bishop.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Leopold, bishop of Worms.

In Worms a few years ago there was a bishop named Leopold, a bishop only in name, in all his aćtions a tyrant. This man had no goodness in him, no piety, no care or reverence for God; and one day his brother, a great nobleman,

said to him: "Lord Bishop, you scandalise us of the laity very much by the example you give us. Before you became a bishop, you had some reverence for God; now you care absolutely nothing for Him." He answered, "Brother, there were once two neighbours, one of whom sinned by the example of the other. Both died and went to hell. Being in torments, one said to the other: "Curses on you! it was by your example that I was tempted to sin, and so came to deserve this place." And the other replied: "My good neighbour, if you covet my place, hand me over yours, and I will give you mine." And so I say to you, brother; if when we get to hell, my place there shall seem to you more honourable than your own, climb up into it, and I will take yours." He answered, "This is but a poor consolation."

This Leopold was of so diabolical a character, that at the time of the quarrel between the two kings, Otto and Philip, when he had seized upon the bishopric of Mainz by the authority of Philip, and had taken part in many battles, he spared neither churches nor cemeteries. Once when his soldiers said to him, "Sir, it is not lawful for us to rob cemeteries," he replied, "It is impossible to rob a cemetery unless you carry off the bones of the dead." Now when he had been deprived of his office and benefice by Pope Innocent, on account of his invasion of the said bishopric, he collected an army, relying upon Philip's help, and set out for Italy to make war upon the Pope himself. In more than one town, horrible to tell, he excommunicated the Pope with bell, book and candle; but afterwards, through hatred of the emperor Otto, he was restored both to his office and his benefice. This man fell often and deeply, as has been told; whether he rose again through contrition at the end, I do not know. This I know, that the embassy, on which he was employed when he died, was a hotbed of strife.

Novice.—Often have I seen men fall, and rise again through penitence but that some rise again stronger than before, I should like you to show me by examples.

CHAPTER X.

Of a scholar of Paris, who could not make his confession orally through sheer excess of penitence, and whose sins, when written out, were deleted by the Hand of God.

Monk.—It is now twenty two years, more or less, since I came to the Order in the year of our Lord 1199; and it was in that same year that there happened in Paris the events that I am about to relate, which were told me by men both religious and learned, such as abbots and scholastici[1]. There was a certain student there, who, at the suggestion of our mortal enemy, had committed such sins, that from very shame he could not confess to any mortal man. Yet while he thought upon the torments of hell prepared for the wicked, and the inconceivable joys of eternal life awaiting the righteous, and while he trembled every day lest the judgment of God should fall upon him, he was so tormented by the stings of conscience, that he began visibly to waste away in body.

What need of more? At last in God's mercy, his shame was overcome by that serviceable fear, which is able to draw charity after it, as the cobbler's bristle draws the thread. He went to S. Victor, asked for the Prior, and signified that he had come to make his confession. He, always ready for that duty, as are all the brethren of that monastery, came at once, took his seat in the customary place, and, after a preliminary exhortation, waited in silence for the youth to begin. Then a wonderful thing happened. The merciful Lord, Whose nature is goodness, Whose will is power, and Whose work is compassion, in that same hour poured into his heart so deep a flood of contrition that, as often as he began his confession, so often did his voice fail entirely, broken by sobs and sighs; tears were in his eyes, sighs in his breast, sobs in his throat.

When the Prior saw this, he said to the student: "Go and write out your sins upon a sheet of paper, and bring it to me." Gladly he took the advice, withdrew, wrote, and

[1] See II, vii, n.

the next day came back. When he tried again to make his confession, he failed as before; and when he found it impossible to speak, he held out the paper to the Prior. The Prior read it, and was aghast at what he read, and he said to the youth, "I cannot of myself advise you; may I show this to the abbot?" and the other assented. The Prior went to the abbot, and gave him the paper to read, laying the whole case before him in due order. What happened then let sinners hear and take comfort, let even the desperate take new life and hope. As soon as the abbot unfolded the paper to read, he found its whole contents expunged. And the abbot said to the Prior, "What am I to read in this paper? there is nothing written on it." When the Prior heard this, he looked at the paper with the abbot, and said, "I can assure your Fatherliness that this youth wrote out an account of his sins upon this paper, and that I read it myself before I gave it to you. But it is clear, surely, that the most merciful God has given heed to his intense contrition, and in His justice has blotted out his sin as already sufficiently punished; since indeed the deleting of all the writing signifies the deleting of all the sin." Then they sent for the student and showed him the paper, telling him that God had blotted out all his sin. When he had looked at it, and recognised by certain marks that it was indeed the same, his heart was as much dilated with excess of joy, as it had been contracted by excess of grief. They laid no penance upon him, but advised him how he might show gratitude to God for His great goodness, and live carefully for the rest of his life. Behold how that youth, as is plain to see, though far from perfect before his great sin, fell indeed, but rose again perfected.

Novice.—In what way was he perfected?

Monk.—In charity.

Novice.—What then is the perfection of charity?

Monk.—When the mind is unconscious of any sin either mortal or venial, and is free not only from guilt but also from punishment. And I think that, if this clerk had died in such a state, he would have experienced no purgatorial pains, because perfect charity consumes both lead and stubble, both guilt and punishment. This is the opinion of many; but

others say that even the most perfect carry with them both hay and stubble.

Novice.—Why were his sins not blotted out before they were shown to the Prior?

Monk.—That confession might not appear superfluous, for there is no forgiveness without the desire for confession. Even the confession itself, by the shame it entails, forms an important factor in satisfaction. For the guilt was put away at the first stab of contrition, and then as contrition grows deeper, and confession is added, the punishment also is blotted out.

Novice.—I marvel at the contrition of this man no less than at that of Mary, to whom the Voice of the Saviour said, while she wept so bitterly in silence, *Her sins which were many are forgiven her because she loved much* (Luke vii. 47).

Monk.—As you have spoken of Mary Magdalene, I will tell you of the wonderful contrition of a libidinous woman, in whom in our times Christ showed the miracles of His grace, no less than of old in Mary.

CHAPTER XI.

Of a woman who had a child by her own son, and how Pope Innocent judged her to be absolved from her sin because of her perfect contrition.

In different places and from various persons have I heard what I am now to tell you. Four years ago, in the year,[1] if I remember rightly, that Pope Innocent died, a certain woman, inflamed with the fire of lust, approached her own son, and by him conceived and brought forth another son. Terror stricken at so unspeakable an act of incest, and fearing every moment to be handed over to Satan, or to perish by sudden death, she began, in God's mercy, to be sore troubled about making amends. Having first taken counsel with her priest, she went to Rome taking the babe with her, so I think it was

[1] Innocent III died July 16, 1216.

told me, and with much persistence gained an interview with the lord Pope Innocent; and before him, in the hearing of all who were gathered there, she made her confession with such tears and laments as to strike terror to the hearts of all. She carried her infant in her arms as the proof of her crime.

The lord Pope, seeing in the woman so great contrition and perceiving that she was truly penitent, was moved with compassion for her; but like a wise physician, who wished to cure the patient both quickly and completely, he desired to make further trial of the healing power of her contrition. Wherefore he ordered her to show herself there in the presence of all, in the same garb in which she had gone to her son when she sinned. She, thinking temporal shame as nothing in comparison with shame eternal, immediately went out, laid aside her clothes, and returned clad only in a single linen garment, and showed by such obedience how ready and eager she was to make amends. And that most wise and learned man, realising that such obedience such shamefacedness, such penitence, could outweigh even the foulest sin, said to her in the presence of all: "Thy sin is forgiven thee; go in peace," and laid no further penalty upon her.

One of the Cardinals, who was present, murmured with the Pharisee, against the Pope and disapproved his judgment, saying that so brief a penitence was not enough for so heinous a fault and the Pope answered him, "If I have dealt wrongly with this woman, and if her penitence is insufficient in God's sight, then let the devil have power to enter my body and torment me here in the presence of you all; but if on the other hand, you are wrong in blaming me, let the same thing happen to you." Forthwith the devil began to torment the Cardinal, and by his torment God showed openly that the penance of the woman was sufficient and acceptable. The Cardinal, healed at length by the prayers of all, learnt never again to carp at the bounty of the Divine mercy. See then how that woman, like the clerk of the former chapter, fell sick to death, and rose again, made every whit whole.

Novice.—Marvellous is the loving-kindness of God, that so brief a contrition should blot out so terrible a sin, for which a penitence of fifteen years would scarce seem enough.

Monk.—It can blot out sins much greater even than this.

Novice.—What can they be?

Monk.—Idolatry, heresy, denial of the Creator; for these come from diabolical possession, while carnal sins arise from human weakness. Wherefore to soften the Divine wrath it is said in the commendatory prayer for the departed, "Though he has sinned against Thee, yet he has not denied Thee."

Novice.—I beg that you will make this clear by an example, if you know of any who has fallen by denying God, and has been able to rise again by contrition.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the contrition of a young noble, who denied Christ, and was restored to grace by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin.

Monk.—Within the last five years there lived near Floreffe, a Premonstratensian monastery in the diocese of Liége, a young noble, whose father died and left him much wealth, for he was a great and powerful Baron. The youth was knighted and, in his feverish search after popularity, very soon was brought down from great wealth to excessive poverty. For to win the applause of others, he gave himself up altogether to tourneys and pageants, spending vast sums of money upon actors and buffoons. His annual revenues were not enough for these extravagances, and he was compelled to sell his father's estates.

Now there was living in the neighbourhood a knight, both rich and honourable, although a courtier ; and it was to him that the youth disposed of his lands, freeholds and fiefs, selling some and mortgaging others. And when he had now reached the point of having no more property either to sell or to pledge, he determined to leave the country, for he felt it would be more tolerable to beg among strangers than to endure the shame of poverty among his own kinsfolk and acquaintances.

Now he had a steward, an evil fellow, Christian by name, but no Christian in life, for he was wholly given over to the service of the devil. This man, seeing his master depressed, and knowing full well the cause of his trouble, said to him, "Sir, would you like to be rich again?" and he answered, "Of course I would like to be rich, provided the riches came with God's blessing." "Have no fear for that," said the steward, "only come with me, and all will be well." Forthwith he went after that scoundrel, as Eve after the voice of the serpent, or a bird after the snare of the fowler, ready to fall quickly into the clutches of the devil. So that night he led him through a wood to a place of marsh and bog, where he began to hold converse with some one unseen. And the youth asked with whom he was speaking, and that vile steward answered: "Hush, take no notice of any I may speak with." Then he began to speak again, and when the youth repeated his question, he replied, "With the devil." At these words, overwhelming horror swept over him, for who could be unmoved at hearing such a reply in such a place and at such an hour! The steward went on, speaking thus to the devil: "My lord, I have brought here this noble, my master, to gain your favour, entreating your majesty that by your aid he may be restored to his former wealth and honours." The devil replied: "If he will be my faithful and devoted servant, I will give him great riches, and to these I will add such glory and honour as his forefathers never knew." Answered the steward, "Gladly will he be your faithful and dutiful slave for such a reward." And the devil went on: "To obtain these things from me, he must begin now by renouncing the Most High." And when the youth heard this and refused to do it, that man of perdition said to him, "Why should you be afraid to utter this one little word? Come, renounce." At last persuaded by the steward, the wretched youth denied his Creator with his lips, made the legal sign of repudiation with his hand, and did homage to the devil.

When this crime was accomplished, the devil added: "The business is still incomplete; he must also renounce the Mother of the Highest, for it is she who does us the greatest harm.

Men are often rejected by the justice of the Son, and yet restored to mercy by the absurd pitifulness of His Mother." Again the serpent hissed into the ear of the youth to obey his master in this also, and to deny the Mother as he had denied the Son. To this the other, though terribly frightened, and troubled beyond measure, replied: "That will I never do." "Why," said he, "you have done the greater thing, now do the less; for the Creator is greater than the creature." But he, "Never will I deny her, not even if I have to beg my bread from door to door for the rest of my life." And so with the transaction still incomplete, having gained no sort of reward, they returned, both laden with an awful weight of sin, the steward by persuading, the youth by consenting.

On their way back, they came to a church, which the bell-ringer had left only half closed. At once the youth leapt down from his horse, gave it to the steward, and said, "Wait here till I come back." And entering the dark church, for the dawn was not yet, he threw himself down before the altar, and began from the very bottom of his heart to call upon the Mother of Mercy. Now there was upon the altar an image of the Virgin Mother herself, holding the Infant Jesus in her arms. And behold by the merits of that most glorious Star of the Sea, the true Dayspring began to arise in the heart of our youth. So deep contrition did the Lord deign to give him, for the sake of His mother, whom he had refused to deny, that he "roared for the very disquietness of his heart," and in his grief filled the whole church with lamentable cries.

At the same hour, the aforesaid knight, who was in possession of all his property, led, as he believed, by the Divine will, passed by this church; and, seeing it open, entered, being quite alone; for he thought that the Divine Mysteries were being celebrated, because he heard voices from within. When he saw the youth who was well known to him, weeping before the altar, he supposed that he was bemoaning his misfortunes, and withdrew quietly behind a pillar, to see what might happen further. Now while the penitent did not dare to call upon or even name that Majesty which he had denied, but only in tearful accents to repeat the name of His most pitiful Mother, there came

through the mouth of her image, in the hearing of both, the voice of that blessed and only advocate of Christian folk speaking thus to her Son: "My sweetest Son, have pity on this man." But the Child turned away His face, and made no answer to His Mother. And when again she besought Him, saying that the man had been led astray, He turned His back on His Mother and said: "This man has renounced me; what can I do for him?" Upon this, the image arose, laid her Son upon the altar, and prostrated herself upon her face before His feet, saying "I beseech Thee, my Son, to pardon him this sin for my sake." Immediately the Child raised up His Mother and replied: "Never, my Mother, have I been able to refuse you anything; behold, for your sake, I forgive him all." Before this, He had forgiven the guilt for the sake of his contrition, and now, on His Mother's intercession, He forgave the penalty as well.

Novice.—Why did He seem so hard to His so beloved Mother?

Monk.—That He might show the youth how deeply he had sinned against Him; and by the heartfelt grief the sin might be the more fully punished. Now he arose and left the church, grieving still for his sin, but joyful in his forgiveness. The knight too came out after him unobserved, and asked him, as though he knew nothing of the matter, why his eyes were so wet and swollen; and he said it was due to the wind. Then said the other: "Sir, I know the reason of your sadness; now I have an only daughter, if you are willing to marry her, I will give you back all your lands as her dowry, and will further make you the heir of all my wealth. "To this the youth made joyful response: "I shall indeed be happy, if you will deign to do this." The knight went home and told everything to his wife; she gave her consent, and the marriage took place; and all his property was restored to the youth under the name of dowry. He is still alive, I think, and his parents-in-law too, but after their death, all their wealth will pass to him.

Novice.—Truly this youth owes unending gratitude to the Blessed Virgin, since by her he obtained forgiveness of his sin, and in addition the comfort of temporal riches.

Monk.—You say well, because it was at her intercession that the Lord poured contrition into his heart, by which he gained forgiveness of his sin. And even the penalty of his sin, was remitted at her intercession, as the youth himself heard. See then how this man fell most grievously, but rose again even more quickly than those we were speaking of before. In the sinister gloom of night he fell, and his rising came before the dawn.

Novice.—What do you think about those who find contrition only at the last?

Monk.—About this you shall hear, not my opinion, but that of the blessed Augustine ; and this is what he says :

CHAPTER XIII.

What Augustine saith about late repentance.

If a man, when brought to the last extremity, desires to be given penance, and is given it, and is forthwith reconciled to God, and then departs from life ; I confess to you, that though we do not refuse him what he asks, yet we do not presume to assert that he has made a good ending. If he died saved, I do not know. We can give penance, but assurance of salvation we cannot give. Do I say then that he will be damned? I do not, but neither do I say that he will be saved. Do you wish then to be set free from all doubt? Then do your penance while yet in good health. If you do this, I tell you that you are safe, because you have done your penance when you might have sinned. If you only desire to do penance when you can no longer sin, it is not you that forsake your sins, but your sins that have forsaken you. Further the realities are two, and only two; either you are pardoned or you are not pardoned. Which of these realities is yours, I know not. Wherefore hold fast to that which is sure, and have no dealings with that which is uncertain.

Of Contrition

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the lay-brother Henry who had put off the confession of a sin until he came to die.

I will tell you what happened in our own monaſtery a few years ago. There was a lay-brother, named Henry, an old man, and the senior lay-brother, who had committed a certain sin, which he had never confessed to abbot, prior, or any one else. Yet he had always been accuſtomed to make his confession frequently, and was held by us all to be a holy and very religious man. When he was now at the point of death, he confessed this sin to Dom Daniel, who was then our prior; and as he afterwards told us, for our warning, it was of so grievous a nature, that if he had remained silent, he muſt have been damned.

Novice.—What do you think about this man's salvation?

Monk.—I think the same as I read in S. Auguſtine: "If his contrition was in charity, he is saved; but if not, he is damned." He whose repentance is late, muſt not only fear, but also love, his Judge.

Novice.—Was there any value then in his watching, or faſting, in his labours and obedience or in any other of his works of righteousness, so long as he was ſtill in mortal sin?

Monk.—None whatever; for all works without charity are dead, nor can they ever come to life. Unhappy then are they who mortify themselves daily in God's service, and gain no reward in life eternal for all their toils. Many are ignorant of these things, presuming too much upon a death-bed repentance, unaware that a penitence put off till then is, as we have been saying, so terribly uncertain. But I will give you examples of two men, one of whom made a genuine, and the other an insincere repentance.

CHAPTER XV.

Of a canon of Paris, who having partaken of the Sacraments at his death, appeared after death to a friend, and told him that he was damned, because his contrition had been insincere.

A little while ago there died in Paris a canon of the church of Notre Dame, a man who had many emoluments and had lived delicately all his life. And because from luxuries, especially from such as pamper the appetite, luſt is born and fed, and is increased by daily ſtimulants, this youth ſtained deeply his robe of flesh, and provoked the wrath of God againſt him by that and other sins. At laſt, being ſtruck down by sickness, in the fear of death, he made his confession, bewailed his sins, promised amendment of life, received the viaticum, was anointed, and died.

His body was buried with great pomp of wordly splendour, as that of a man both rich and well-born; and on the day of his funeral the weather was so calm and serene that it seemed to be paying homage to his remains. Men said to one another: "God has shown many favours to this man; he has enjoyed everything that a Chriſtian man can desire. He was fortified with the divine Sacraments, the sky was placid at his death, with great splendour he has been buried." But "man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart" (1 Sam. xvi. 7). After a few days he appeared to an intimate friend and told him that he was damned; and when the other ſtupefied and affrighted, calling to mind his penitence and confession, and the Holy Communion and anointing that followed, the dead man answered: "One thing I lacked, for want of which none of those which you have enumerated could profit me at all." "What is that?" he asked. "True contrition. For although by the advice of my confessor I vowed to God that I would be continent and do all else that belonged to salvation, yet my conscience told me that if I grew well, I should not be able to keep my promises; and because my heart inclined rather to the breaking than the keeping of my vows, I deserved no forgiveness. God requires a fixed purpose from the sinner." See

how the repentance of this man was both late and insincere; and yet it would not have been too late, if only it had been sincere.

Novice.—Never again shall I be surprised that a late penitence is so rarely sincere.

Monk.—There are many in the world, whom I have known well, who, at a time of sickness, when they were in fear of death, have made their submission within the hands of the abbot, and when they recovered, have broken their vow. Last year at Bonn, a town in the diocese of Cologne, a certain vagabond clerk, Nicholas by name, whom men call the "arch poet," fell grievously sick, and being in fear of death, by his own entreaties and the recommendations of the canons of the church of Bonn, obtained from our abbot admission to the Order. We all thought that he had assumed the cowl with great contrition, yet no sooner was the danger past than he quickly put it off, and casting it from him with a mocking jest, fled away.

Novice.—There are many sinners, who are truly grieved, because they cannot feel contrition. What are we to think about such grief?

Monk.—It cannot be meritorious, because it is without love; but nevertheless it does sometimes prepare the way to love. Love and the will to sin cannot dwell together. But you shall learn both by word and example what S. Bernard thought about such grief.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of a knight of Reims, who died contrite, after receiving the Holy Sacrament in the presence of S. Bernard.

Brother Godfrey, our fellow monk, formerly scholasticus of S. Andrew in Cologne, whom also I mentioned in the third

chapter of my first book, told me this which happened in the city of Reims. At the time, he said, when I was acting as master and instructor of Dom Philip, afterwards archbishop of Cologne, it happened that a certain knight fell ill of a mortal sickness. By the instigation of the devil, this knight, if I remember rightly, was keeping his uncle's daughter as a concubine; and he was so deeply attached to her that no exhortation, nor threat of excommunication, nor any natural feeling of shame could induce him to be parted from her.

Now when the fear of death came upon them, he sent for the priest, and with many tears made an honest confession of all his sins. When the priest warned him that he must put away both this so unlawful connection, and the person herself, who was his cousin, he simply answered: "Sir, I cannot do it," and the priest said, "If you die in such a determination, you will lose your eternal happiness, and be consigned to eternal torment. When the knight persisted in his obstinacy, the priest withdrew, taking with him the Body of the Lord, which he had brought for his Communion.

In the providence of God, S. Bernard, the abbot of Clairvaux, met the priest in the street; and when he asked him why he had not communicated the sick man, and understood the reason, which was indeed a matter of common knowledge, he said to the priest, "Let us go back together to the sick room." They returned, and when the saint had exhorted the knight, now at the point of death, of all things concerning his soul's health, and the latter had promised obedience in all except that one thing only, last of all he said: "Do you now grieve that you have not the will to part from her?" He answered: "Sir, I grieve most deeply that I cannot grieve for this." When he heard this, the abbot told the priest to give him at once the Body of the Lord. Behold a marvel. As soon as the Saviour entered, salvation came to that house. From that moment his will was so completely changed that now he hated her more than he had unlawfully loved, so that he said to the saint with many tears: "Thanks be to God, who hath set me free, for now I would more willingly look upon a toad than upon that woman." And so in a good confession and in perfect contrition he departed to be with the

Novice.—I should like to know if he won that contrition by the grief you spoke of, or by the partaking of the Body of the Lord?

Monk.—Christ in His Sacrament comes in judgment, unless His grace has gone before. For I think that by the prayer of the saint, the grace of Christ illuminated the abyss of his heart, that the saint might not be convicted of presumption, and that the punishment of the dying man might not increase to his damnation. See how the contrition, or penitence, of this man was late, yea, almost at the verge of death, and yet it was genuine by the testimony of the holy abbot, through whose merits he is believed to have gained it.

Novice.—Surely the presence of the just is of vital importance to the dying.

Monk.—This is shown by S. Gregory in one of his Homilies, where he tells of a certain perverse youth, who kept crying out that he was given over to be devoured by a dragon, and how the prayers of those around put the dragon to flight, and gained contrition for the sick man. Hear also about a man of the world, whose final contrition was so genuine, yea, so perfect, that by it he won not only forgiveness of his sins, but also the glory of miracles.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the contrition of Philip, Count of Namur.

Three years ago died Philip, Count of Namur, a man both noble and powerful, being the son of Baldwin, Count of Flanders. Before his death the Lord gave him in his sickness such deep contrition, as has not been seen in any other of our day. Often would he make his confession to four abbots of our Order at the same time, accusing himself so heavily and weeping so bitterly as to draw tears from all. Nor did this satisfy him, but he would cast a halter about his neck and beg his confessors to drag him into the street, saying, "Since I have lived like a dog, it is right that I should die like a dog." He

had handed over to the King of France the daughters of his brother Count Baldwin, who had been made King of Greece; some said that he had taken money for them; whether that be true or not, this deed was an especial grief to him. He caused himself to be carried into the poorest hovel in Namur, and there in great poverty of spirit he departed to be with the Lord. God's mercy, willing to reward such great contrition, deigned to glorify him with miracles, as if he had been a beloved confessor. He was buried in the church of S. Alban the Martyr, where he had instituted a college of canons, appointing their stipends from his own lawful revenues, while he was still in good health ; and though dead, he shines brightly to this day with so many signs and wonders, that even from far countries sick folk come to get health at his tomb, and even dig out the earth near his burial place and carry it away with them as a thing both blessed and blessing.

Novice.—Was it by his former life or by his final contrition that he won so much favour?

Monk.—I think indeed that he had charity before his illness, because he was ever kindly and humble-minded; but almost all that knew both his former life and his final contrition ascribe the glory of miracles to his last great contrition rather than to his former conversation.

Novice.—I see clearly that the tears of contrition avail much in the sight of God.

Monk.—Of what value they are in His eyes, I will show you by the next example.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the contrite prayer of the Convent of Hemmenrode, which, at the time of the Schism, changed the heart of the Emperor Frederick.

At the time of the Papal schism, which took place between the popes Alexander and Calixtus under the Emperor

Frederick, who was himself the author and defender of it, all monaſteries throughout the whole of the Roman Empire were compelled by Imperial ordinance to swear loyalty and obedience to Calixtus, whom Frederick had made pope; and all who refused were bidden to go into exile. When letters to this effect were read in the convent of Hemmenrode, and the brethren replied unanimously that they would by no means secede from the unity of the Church, they were ordered to depart at once from the Roman Empire. When those holy men, eſteeming the Emperor's threats as nothing by the side of the fear of God, had packed up their veſtments and other property, and had arranged to be received into different monaſteries within the realm of France, one of them said to the venerable prieſt David who was a monk among them, "Father, do you not know that we are all leaving this place?" For he was so intent upon heavenly things as to be altogether ignorant of what was going on around him. When he showed himself full of aſtonishment and asked the reason of this, the other explained to him the whole affair. But that blessed man, full of faith in God, said to them: "Take heart, my brothers, for never will the Lord forsake them that hope in Him. Only sing boldly and earneſtly the Antiphon which comes before the Magnificat to-night, and the Lord will comfort you." Now it was the Sunday before Advent, and the Antiphon which comes before the Magnificat is: "O Thou, who guideſt the ſtars in their courses, from whom no depths of the abyss are hid, who holdeſt the earth in the hollow of thine hand, hear us when we call upon Thee." Moreover he, that man of God, went ſtraightway into the church, and pouring out his soul in prayer, besought the divine mercy. The brethren, agreeing moſt heartily with his advice, sang that Antiphon all the more fervently, because of the urgency with which their difficulties pressed upon them as they sang, and incited them to greater zeal. The merciful Lord, moved by the tears of His servants, changed the heart of the Emperor, and letters were sent in haſte bidding them to remain and pray for the Empire. From this you may gather how mightily the heart of God is touched by the tears of contrition.

Novice.—Can anyone by merits or prayers obtain such tears for another?

Monk.—That some by their merits can obtain this grace from God for others, you have an example above in the third chapter, where the apostate monk was justified through the tears of contrition by the merits of his Father and guest, S. Bernard. You have also another example in the sixteenth chapter, where the knight of Reims, making his communion in the presence of the same saint, by his merits gained enlightenment through the gift of contrition, even when he was in very great sin. And yet for neither of these is S. Bernard reported to have prayed. Also that some have availed to win for others tears of contrition with which to water their sins, I will show you by more than one example.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of a nun who obtained for a monk the grace of tears at matins three times in the week.

It was only this year and you yourself were present when Dom Walter, the abbot of Villers, told us of a monk who had been sent by his abbot to a certain convent of nuns of our Order, how he noticed one of them, who seemed to him to be living very near to God, and how he besought her to pray for him. She replied: "What is it that you wish me to seek for you from God?" The monk said: "I want you to pray for me that at the solemn matins, three times a week, that is, on the Monday, Thursday and Saturday, when the services are longer, I may have a special grace of tears and devotion." And she promised faithfully that she would obtain this for him. The monk returned to his abbey, and taking his place in the choir at matins, awaited the promised grace; and indeed he received it abundantly from the Lord through the prayers of that holy nun on those three nights in every week. She, understanding by the Spirit that her

prayer had been heard, sent a message to the monk by a certain clerk who was her friend, and showed him that she knew he had already received the promised grace. Now it happened that the abbot of that house told the story to this clerk for his edification, and the latter smiled saying that he knew it all, even better than the abbot, since he had heard it from the lips of the nun herself. Abbot Walter told us another similar story, and the clerk was there to hear it, saying with his saintly pleasantness, "You are not yet saints, and I am going to tell you something about my own progress in saintliness," and thus began.

CHAPTER XX.

Also of a woman who obtained from the Lord the grace of tears for Dom Walter the Abbot of Villers.

When I heard that the aforesaid monk had received the grace of tears through the nun, I asked my abbot, for I had then only recently become a monk, that I might be allowed to visit these nuns, and forthwith he gave me permission. And so I came for hospitality to the house of a certain honourable matron of Brabant; and when she heard the object of my visit, she said jestingly: "Why do you want to see those fanatics? If you like, I will introduce you to a good woman, who obtains from God everything that she asks for." I replied: "Very much do I desire to see such a woman." And immediately at her word, a woman came from her room, and approached me, and began to talk with me. At her coming, I felt the presence of grace, and begged her to pray for me. When she said, "What do you wish me to ask for you?" I replied, "That I may be able to weep for my sins." And she: "Are you not a monk? He who cannot weep for his sins is no true monk." And when I urged her to obtain this grace for me, she answered, "Go in peace, you shall have it abundantly." The next night, when I was praying at my

bedside and thinking upon my sins, and yet not expecting the gift promised by that woman, I began to weep so abundantly and beyond my wont, continuing nearly till midnight, that at length, fearing to injure my brain, I succeeded with the utmost difficulty in refraining from more tears. When she sent me a message that she had on that particular night obtained for me the grace of tears, I went back to see her, and asked, "Tell me in charity, how you obtained for me that grace." And she answered in these words: "At first indeed I found the Lord hard to move, but I said to Him, 'Lord, I will not let Thee go, except Thou grant this monk the grace of tears;' and forthwith He granted it to you."

He added also an example of the same kind.

CHAPTER XXI.

Also of a monk who obtained this same grace for the said Walter.

At another time, he said, I asked one of our monks, a man of great reputation, to pray to God for me; and when he offered me a choice of what I wished to get from God, I, wishing to make trial of the value of his words, answered, "I want you to obtain for me after mass the grace of tears that I may bewail my sins." And he promised me with great confidence that I should have my request. Next day, when, after mass was over, I was remaining a while alone in prayer before one of the altars, there came to me such an abundance of tears that I was greatly astonished. When later the monk saw me (he was still a youth in years, but in character very mature) he began to make signs to me, as if asking how I fared, noting that the grace had been conferred upon me. I not understanding his signs, led him into the presence of the prior, and asked what he had meant. He said, "Have you not had to-day a copious gift of tears?" When I asked if he had seen me weeping, he replied, "How can you be so foolish as to

think that I saw you? I have been bled, and it was not lawful for me to go into the church when mass was being said." Then I asked him, how he had obtained that grace for me, and he answered in almoſt the same words as the woman we were speaking of juſt now: "I found the Lord hard at firſt; but I said to Him, 'Lord, I will not let Thee go, until Thou do as I ask.' He was pleased with these words of mine, and granted me my prayer."

Novice.—Marvellous is the loving kindness that can and will be thus conſtrained by His servants and handmaidens, as the kindeſt father is wont to be conſtrained by the sons and daughters that have been moſt tenderly brought up by him.

Monk.—Those who truly love Him, never suffer repulse from Him in their prayers, unless they ask for hurtful things.

Novice.—If God confer upon anyone the grace of tears in prayer or other good marks of contrition, is it dangerous to the recipient to wish that they should be seen by others?

Monk.—The answer to this queſtion depends on the intention. If he desires others to see his tears only for their edification, while he himself preserves true humility at heart, then it is well with him; but if not, it is ill.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the monk whose tears were an invitation to the devil, because his heart was uplifted.

A monk of high repute told me when I was a novice, about another monk, who was kneeling in prayer one day before the altar, when God gave him so abundant a gift of tears, that they even bedewed the pavement; whereupon, by the direct agency of the devil, as was afterwards made plain, vain glory sprang up in his heart, so that he said to himself, "How I wish there was someone here to see this grace of mine." Immediately the author of that ill desire was present under the appearance of a Benedictine monk, who ſtood by his side and

showed the greatest interest in his tears. The monk, raising his eyes, and realising, both by an instinctive horror, and from the blackness of his dress, that it was the devil, the author of all pride, by the power and sign of the cross put to flight him whom he had invited by the vice of vain glory.

Novice.—If you have any other examples of contrition, I beseech you to tell me them.

Monk.—In thinking upon contrition, many examples come to my mind, in which Christ, the author of every virtue, is glorified, and every kind of penitent consoled.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of a clerk who debauched a Jewish maiden, and how the Jews were struck dumb in the Cathedral, when they tried to accuse the offender who was now contrite.

In a city of England there lived the daughter of a Jew, who, like many of her race, was a very beautiful girl. A young clerk, a relative of the bishop of that city and a canon of the cathedral saw her and fell in love with her, and after much difficulty persuaded her at last to consent to his desires. When in his impatience and consuming passion, he kept daily urging her, she said to him at last, " I am very dear to my father, who watches over me so carefully that neither can I come to you or you to me, unless it be on the night of the Friday before your Easter." For then the Jews are said to labour under a a sickness called the bloody flux, with which they are so much occupied, that they can scarcely pay attention to anything else at that time. The youth hearing this and being almost beside himself with excess of desire, forgot his Christianity, forgot the passion of his Lord, and on that very night came to the maiden and spent the whole night with her till morning. Now the Jew, her father, in the early hours before the dawn, entered his daughter's room, and wishing to see if she were

sleeping quietly or if by chance she needed warmer covering, came up to her bed. When he saw this youth lying by her side, he was aghaſt and cried out with rage and grief, and was on the point of killing him when he remembered that he was a relative of the bishop, and fear reſtrained his hand; but he cried out in bitter anger, "What do you here, you vile Chriſtian? Where is your honour or your religion? You are delivered into my hands by the juſt judgment of God, and I would kill you now like a dog, if I were not afraid of my lord the bishop." The youth, terrified by such an awakening and begging for mercy was driven out of the house in the utmoſt confusion. On that day the bishop was to celebrate the solemn office at three o'clock, and this youth, as being on duty for the week, was to read the epiſtle. But while he was afraid to approach the sacred myſteries with a conscience so unclean, yet he feared to excite suspicion by getting another to take his place on such a day, and was afraid to disclose in confession so foul a sin so recently committed. So when, overcome by shamefacedness, he had robed himself in the sacred veſtments, and was ſtanding in his place in the bishop's presence, the Jew, followed by a great number of his fellows, burſt into the church with a great uproar, intending to complain to the bishop about his relative. When the youth saw him and knew full well why he had come, his heart turned to water, he grew pale, his limbs trembled, and he prayed inwardly with all his heart, "Lord God, deliver me now, and I vow to Thee that I will offend no more, and will make all the amends I can for this sin." The moſt merciful Creator, who hateth sin, but loveth the sinner, as soon as He saw his contrition, turned the dreaded confusion on to the heads of the unbelievers. The bishop, wondering what these Jews could want in the church, especially on that day when they were representing the passion of Chriſt their Lord, signed to them to ſtand ſtill. They pressed nearer to him, but as soon as they opened their mouths to accuse the clerk, they found their voices gone, and none could utter a single word. The bishop, seeing the mouths of the Jews gaping wide at him and no sound coming from them, thought they had come there simply to mock at the holy myſteries, and indignantly ordered them

all to be driven out of the church. As soon as the mass was over, the clerk, after this experience of the Divine mercy vouchsafed to him, went to the bishop, made a full confession, and asked for penance. The bishop, admiring and glorifying the loving kindness of the Lord, both in the greatness of the miracle, and in the penitence of the youth, urged and persuaded him to marry lawfully this girl whom he had ruined, as soon as she should be born again in the grace of baptism; for he was a man both merciful and just, and preferred that his young relative should lose all hope of ecclesiastical preferment, than that the girl should be exposed to peril by remaining in her father's sins. The clerk, not unmindful of the Divine bounty, and eager to atone to God for the sin he had committed, took the vows later in our Order, as did his wife at his instigation, This story was told me by a certain pious abbot of our Order, and it shows you how much good was wrought by contrition in the case of this man; for by it the lapsed was restored, the Jews were put to silence, and an infidel woman brought to the Faith.

Novice.—Well do I see, wonder and rejoice, when I reflect how the goodness of God encompasses us in such manifold ways.

Monk.—As we have been speaking of Jews, would you like to hear another somewhat similar story, to the honour of our faith and of all Christian folk and to the confusion of the Jews?

Novice.—Truly I am most eager to hear it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Also of a Jewess with child by a certain clerk, who, while her parents were expecting the birth of the Messiah, brought forth a daughter.

Monk.—In the city, I think, of Worms, there lived a Jew, who had a beautiful daughter; and close by lived a young

clerk, who fell in love with her, seduced her and got her with child; for their houses were so near together, that the clerk could enter unnoticed whenever he wished, and talk with the maiden at his pleasure. When she discovered that she had conceived, she said to the youth, "I am with child, what shall I do? If my father should find out, he will kill me." The clerk answered, "Have no fear; I will make you perfectly safe. If your father or mother tell you that they suspect anything, simply say that you know nothing about it, that all you know is that you are a maiden and have never known a man; I will so deal with them that they will surely believe you." For he had pondered diligently how best he could save the girl, and this was the device he had hit upon. He took a hollow reed, and at dead of night approached the room in which he knew her parents were sleeping, and putting the end of the reed in at the window, he spoke through it words like these: "O upright souls, beloved of God," and here he spoke their names, "rejoice, for behold, your virgin daughter hath conceived a son, who shall be the deliverer of your people Israel;" and then he carefully withdrew the reed. The Jew who had awakened at the first sound of this voice, shook his wife and said: "Did you not hear what the heavenly voice said to us?" And when she answered, "No," he said: "Let us pray that you too may be found worthy to hear it." While they were praying, the clerk, who was standing by the window, and listening attentively to all they were saying, after a little delay repeated the same words as before and added: "You must show great honour to your daughter, and tend her with the greatest care, and preserve diligently the boy who shall be born from her virgin body, for he is the Messiah, whose coming you have so long expected." They, in their exultation since this repetition confirmed the revelation, could scarcely wait for the dawn. Looking at their daughter, and seeing by her shape that she had conceived, they said to her: "Tell us, daughter, by whom you are with child." She replied just as she had been instructed; and they, almost beside themselves with joy, could not refrain from telling their friends "what they had heard from the angel." These told the story to others, and it

was bruited abroad through cities and towns that this maiden would give birth to the Messiah. When the time of her delivery drew near, many Jews flocked to the girl's house, eager to share in the rejoicings over this new nativity so long hoped for. But the justice of God turned the vain hope of the wicked into an idle tale, their joy into sorrow, their expectation into confusion of face. And rightly; for it was fitting that they whose forefathers had been troubled like Herod by the birth of the Son of God, which brought salvation to mankind, should in these times be mocked by such a delusion. What need of more? The hour came in which the unhappy one should be delivered, and there ensued the usual pain, groans and cries. At last she brought forth an infant, not indeed the Messiah, but a daughter. When this became known, there was much confusion and trouble among the Jews, and one of them, wild with indignation, seized the poor baby by the foot and dashed it against the wall.

Novice.—What happened to the girl after all this?

Monk.—Her father, overcome with anger at his shame, treated her cruelly, and extracted from her by torture a confession of the whole fraud.

Novice.—It was a miserable ending, that an infidel maiden, who had been seduced and ruined by a Christian man should not have been brought to baptism, like the girl you told me of above.

Monk.—Perhaps the clerk was really unable to bring this about, or more likely perhaps took no pains to do it, but rejoiced rather in the confounding of the Jews than in the enlightenment of the maiden. If, as you say, it was a miserable thing that the unbaptized was not brought to the truth by baptism, it is a still more dreadful thing that in our own day one who had been baptized should have been urged by a Christian bishop to return to Judaism.

Novice.—Will you tell me about that?

CHAPTER XXV.

Also of a baptized Jewish maiden at Louvain.

Monk.—A little while ago, the daughter of a Jew at Louvain was converted to the faith in the following manner. A clerk named Rener, chaplain to the Duke of Louvain, was in the habit of going to the house of this Jew to argue with him about the Christian faith. His daughter, then a little girl, would often listen very eagerly to the discussion, and would weigh, as well as her intelligence allowed, both the arguments of the Jew her father, and those of his clerical opponent; and so, little by little, she became by the providence of God, imbued with the Christian faith. Being taught secretly also by the clerk, she became so far contrite as to say that she wished to be baptized. A woman was brought to her, who withdrew her secretly from her father's house; the clerk baptized her and placed her in a convent of the Cistercian Order, called Parc-aux-Dames. When her conversion became known, the infidel father was much grieved, and offered the Duke a great sum of money to restore to him his daughter, who, he complained, had been taken by stealth from his house. Now the Duke was quite willing to restore the girl, though a Christian, to her father, though a Jew; but the clerk Rener resisted him, saying, "Sir, if you commit this crime against God and His church, never can your soul be saved." Dom Walter, the abbot of Villiers, also opposed him. The Jew, seeing that he was disappointed of the hope he had cherished from the Duke, is said to have bribed Hugo, the bishop of Liège, who took the part of the Jew to such an extent, that he sent letters to the convent of nuns at Parc-aux-Dames, ordering them to restore his daughter to him. But when the Jew, accompanied by his friends and relations reached the convent, the maiden, who was established there, though she knew nothing of his coming, began to perceive a very evil odour, so that she said openly, "I do not know whence it comes, but an odour as of Jews is troubling me." Meanwhile the Jews were knocking at the window; and the abbess, as I believe, said to the girl,

" Daughter Catharine," for so she had been named at her baptism, " your parents wish to see you." She replied, " That explains the odour I perceived ; I will not see them ;" and she refused to leave the house. At the end of the year the bishop of Liège was accused of this action of his before Dom Engilbert Archbishop of Cologne in the Synod held by him, and he was ordered never again to trouble the aforesaid convent with regard to this girl who had been baptized. He was silenced for a time, but not really obedient; for not long afterwards he sent a letter summoning the young woman, under pain of excommunication, to come to Liège to answer the objections raised by her father. She came but under good protection. It was alleged, on the part of the Jew, that she was carried away and baptized by force when under age; and it was said to the girl: " Katharine, we have been told that you would gladly go back to your father, if you were allowed." She replied, " Who told you this?" and they answered, " Your father himself." Then in a clear voice she uttered these words: " My father truly has lied in his beard." Now when the Jew's advocate continued to urge her, Dom Walter, the abbot of Villers was much moved and said to him: " Sir, you are speaking against God and against your own honour. Be sure of this, that if you say one single word more against the girl, I will do all I can with the lord Pope, that you may never be allowed to speak in any cause again." Then being frightened by this, he said privately to the abbot, " My lord abbot, what harm does it do to you if I can manage to get money out of this Jew? I will say nothing that can possibly hurt the girl." But presently when he received his fees from the Jew, he said to him, " I do not dare to say another word in this case." At the end of the year, when Dom Wido. abbot of Clairvaux, was making his visitation in the diocese of Liège, he met the bishop, warned him, and begged him to have respect for God and his own honour, and to cease from harassing a maiden already dedicated to Christ. To whom the bishop replied: " My good lord abbot, what has this case to do with you?" The abbot answered, " It has a great deal to do with me, and for two reasons; first because I am a Christian, and next, because that

convent in which she is living is of the lineage of Clairvaux ; " and he added, " I shall place this girl and her case under the protection of the lord Pope, and shall ground my appeal upon the letters written by you against her." At the time of the General Chapter, he sent to the Prior of Parc, through our abbot, letters which he had obtained from the lord Pope against the bishop, so that, if by any chance the bishop should attempt to harass the convent further on this girls' account, he might defend himself by these letters.

Novice.—Just as, a little while ago, I was edified by the pity of the English bishop, so am I now scandalized by the avarice of him of Liège.

Monk.—His defenders say that his persistence in this affair was due, not to love of money, but to zeal for justice. But it is difficult to believe this, because if he had been actuated by the motive of justice, he would certainly not have tried to force a baptised girl, a virgin consecrated to Christ and a nun in a Christian convent, to return to Jewish infidelity.

Novice.—Yes, I fully agree with that.

Monk.—I have thought of another example, somewhat similar to this, of a man in the world, a knight, whose action seems of itself to reproach this bishop.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of a girl who was baptized at Linz.

In a town not far from us called Linz, there was within the last three years a girl, the daughter of a Jew, who was kindled from on high with a desire for baptism ; and she went to a certain matron of that town and told her quite simply that she wished to be baptized. The woman advised her to go to the knight Conrad, and lay her wish before him. This she did, and the knight, overjoyed to be able to help her, gladly promised her his advice, and every kind of support

that was in his power to give. On the day she was to be baptized, she said to him: "Sir, I pray you to arrange that my father may not see me within the next three days; for if he should discover me, he is so clever that I fear he would compel me to return again to Judaism." The knight thereupon posted armed men at all the approaches to the church to keep the Jew away, so that the maiden might go in and out without fear of being seen by her father; and by God's will, the virgin was baptized under the name of Elizabeth. A few days afterwards, her infidel mother met her and urged her to come back to Judiasm. "I cannot," she replied, "for I have already been made a Christian." Then said the mother, "I can easily undo your baptism." The girl, wishing to find out what her mother meant by this, asked how she would do it. "I would draw you," said the Jewess, "three times through the opening of the latrine, and thus the virtue of your baptism would be left behind." When the daughter heard this, she cursed her mother, spat at her, and fled away. The aforesaid knight, though young and not very rich, brought up the maiden like a daughter, intending either to find a husband for her, or to place her in a convent.

Novice.—What will the bishop of Liége say in the Day of Judgment when he shall see the knight delighting in the conversion of the maiden?

Monk.—It is not for us to judge our bishops, for they are much criticised by many, and sometimes condemned without cause.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of a clerk who said that the German bishops could not be saved.

A few years ago this terrible saying was uttered against bishops by a clerk in Paris: "I can believe a great deal," he

said, "but there is one thing I can never believe, namely, that any bishop in Germany can ever be saved ! "

Novice.—Why should he condemn the bishops in Germany rather than those of France, England, Lombardy or Tuscany?

Monk.—Because all the bishops in Germany have both swords committed to them ; I mean the temporal power as well as the spiritual ; and since they hold the power of life and death, and make wars, they are compelled to be more anxious about the pay of their soldiers than the welfare of the souls committed to their charge. Nevertheless we find among the bishops of Cologne, who were both Pontiffs and temporal Princes, some who were also saints ; for instance, the blessed Bruno, S. Heribert and S. Hanno. The words of this clerk recall to my mind a still more terrible saying uttered against bishops by a man now dead.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of a monk of Clairvaux, who refused to accept a bishopric.

In our own day there was a monk of Clairvaux who was elected to a bishopric ; but when the electors sent to invite him, he refused to take up the burden of office ; the command of his abbot was then laid upon him, but he still refused. Therefore they left off pressing him, and not long after he died. After his death he appeared very plainly to a friend of his, who asked him how he fared, and if he had anything to fear for his refusal. He answered " No," and added : " If I had obeyed and undertaken the bishopric, I should have been eternally lost ; " and then he made use of a very terrible expression : " The condition of the church, " he said, " has come to this, that it is no longer worthy of being ruled by any but reprobate bishops."

Novice.—It is surely proved, by the many miracles that he wrought, that S. William, bishop of Bordeaux, was among the number of the elect.

Monk.—I think that in passing this terrible sentence, he was thinking of the great number of bad bishops, and of the comparative rarity of the good, and that the wickedness of the people required this rarity.

Novice.—May we leave this subject now, because there is still much that I want to hear about contrition?

Monk.—What I have been telling you about baptized girls and bishops does belong to contrition, because in adults baptism without contrition can have no saving effect, and it is the part of bishops to heal the contrite in heart by hearing confessions and appointing penance. Wherefore since few bishops in our time are zealous in such medicine, and practise it so little, they are sometimes justly condemned by their perishing flock.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of a bishop of Lombardy, who showed to Christian, bishop of Mainz, the names of all his flock written out upon a scroll.

In the days of the Emperor Frederick, the grandfather of the Frederick now reigning, Christian the bishop of Mainz found himself on a certain occasion sitting next to a bishop of Lombardy, who asked him if he knew all the people in the diocese. To this the bishop replied, smiling, "I think that my diocese is about the size of the whole of Lombardy;" and the other in his kindly anxiety was terrified to think of the peril his brother must incur in giving his account,[1] and said, "I know the names of all the sheep entrusted to me; they are all written down in this paper," taking out a scroll and showing it to him.

Novice.—I do not wonder: for can a man guide so many souls without peril to himself?

Monk.—That reminds me of a very terrible prophecy,

[1] There seems to be a hiatus here. It is filled by the next two lines taken from the same story, as told in the author's "Homilies."

which agrees with what is said above, and which seems to be fulfilled in our times. This was the tenor of it.

CHAPTER XXX.

The vision of a monk concerning the schism of the Roman Empire, of the calamities of the diocese of Cologne, of the Holy Land and of the coming of Antichrist.

Once when brother Simon was standing in prayer before the altar of S. Mary, the Mother of God, he heard a voice saying to him: "Take this warning to your chief pastor and say 'Thy sheep will bleed profusely.' And bid him not to kill himself and them with poison; for he too hath set his affections on the bellies of wide-gaping wolves. My people will begin to be troubled by the cruel beast who is become incarnate. Go forth, and proclaim on all sides the great wrath of Almighty God, and say: 'Except you be converted and amend your ways, you shall be slain and cast into the eternal fires. My enemies will avenge my wrongs.'" After this there appeared to him five very fat sheep, and then three lean oxen. And when he asked what these meant, it was answered, "The five sheep are five years of great abundance, and the three oxen are three years of extreme famine." And again, "Traitorous Romans will stir up cruel rumours, and by their evil counsel will divide the Roman power." And again, "Jerusalem shall be taken and destroyed, and my enemies will fulfil my anger, because they have polluted the streets, which once my own feet trod. They shall be afflicted with the extremity of hunger. Heaven and earth tremble, but man refuseth to tremble before that which cometh from the cruel beast. After this shall the sun be turned into darkness. Then shall come the day that shall have the length of two days. But after the darkening of the sun, it shall be known that the cruel beast will be revealed to the ten lost tribes. And the blood of all the saints, that is of all my

people, shall be poured forth, because at that time the former persecutions shall revive. Therefore let every one of my chosen prepare himself, that he may walk uprightly in this short life." After this, brother Simon saw a demon, clad in breastplate and helmet, having scales like the scales of a carp. His eyes blazed fitfully, like a torch that the wind blows upon. Out of his mouth and nostrils proceeded flames of sulphur; his teeth were part white, part yellow. And after this there came a voice: "After the darkening of the sun, the cruel beast by black magic shall raise up certain Jews as if from the dead, but they will not be Jews, but false prophets, saying that they have risen from the dead, and stirring vain hopes in the real Jews, encouraging them in their unbelief and deceiving many." Then was added, "O Cologne, bewail thy miseries that shall come upon thee, for all these woes shall come, not alone for the guilt of thy bishop, but also for that of the whole people. None the less that bishop must suffer most, for he is the head of all the rest." When our convent went forth (I, 1) to the mountain of Stromberg, it found there that all this vision was fulfilled. In that same year Jerusalem was taken, and the Holy Land; as had been foretold in the vision.

Novice.—I much desire to know the interpretation of this vision.

Monk.—It seems to me to treat partly of those things which happened in our times in the diocese of Cologne, and partly of the coming of Antichrist. Moreover this revelation was made in the diocese of Cologne, and to the bishop of that diocese, as I gather from the conclusion of it; but who this Simon was I do not know at all. The "chief pastor" I understand to be the bishop Adolphus, who after the death of the Emperor Henry, looking upon the Empire as a thing for sale, was infected with the poison of avarice, and was the cause of the death of very many. Nor is this wonderful. For he "set his affections upon the bellies of wolves gaping widely" for the treasures of Richard, King of England, and by their advice chose Otto[1] the Saxon, his nephew, to be

[1] Son of Henry the Lion; a favourite nephew of Richard I, who made him Duke of Yorkshire and Count of Poitou, and supported his claim to the Empire.

King of the Romans. From that time " the cruel beaſt," that is, avarice, was incarnate ; that is, became so companionable and dear to men, that under its influence Chriſtian potentates forsook both faith and righteous dealing, neglected their oaths and made light of perjury. At that time a Cardinal was sent to Cologne to confirm the election of Otto, and to absolve the princes from the oath they had sworn to Frederick,[1] who is now reigning ; which caused, as the event showed, rather the division of the Empire than its consolidation. From that time the provinces were waſted with fire and the churches spoiled, much blood was shed, Adolphus was deposed, Cologne besieged. Then was fulfilled the laſt part of the vision, " O Cologne, bewail thy miseries, etc." In the beginning of the episcopate of this Adolphus, although it had been preceded by years of great abundance, there followed three years of such ſterility, that in the early spring a bushel of winter wheat was sold for a mark of silver. The reſt of the vision is very obscure and beyond my comprehension.

Novice.—At the time of the division of the Roman Empire, the lord Pope Innocent was condemned by many who said that he was the author of the schism, firſt by taking hotly the part of Otto, and afterwards by opposing him.

Monk.—That is why when the same Innocent of blessed memory was one day preaching at Rome to edify the people, John Capot, who was an adherent of Otto, interrupted him, crying out : " Thy words are the words of God, but thy deeds are the deeds of the devil."

Novice.—I beg you to come back to the subject of contrition, from which we have wandered far, by the occasion of a few chance words.

Monk.—So great is the power of contrition, that no sin can withſtand it, neither perjury, nor murder, nor theft, nor even usury.

[1] Henry in 1197 had induced them to swear fealty to Frederick, then a child of two years old. Philip II, his uncle, was elected by the Diet of Muhlhausen 1198 ; and accepted, finding his nephew's claims impossible. Three months later, the other party of German magnates met at Cologne, and elected Otto. Civil war between the two for ten years ensued. Both appealed to Innocent III, who in 1201 decided in favour of Otto ; but in 1207 Philip had become so strong that the Pope changed his mind and advised Otto to resign.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of the contention of holy angels with demons for the soul of a contrite usurer.

An aged prieſt, who was a Benedictine monk, told me a ſtory, well worth remembering, about a usurer ; I do not know if it has ever been written down. He said that there was a very rich usurer, who held in pledge the treasuries of various churches ; and this man, while his heart was ſtill full of insatiable avarice, was ſtricken down with mortal sickness. Then for the firſt time he came to his right mind, late though it was, and began to think upon the burden of usury, the torments of hell, and the difficulty of repentance. And sending for a Benedictine abbot, who was known to him, he said : " Sir, I am grievously ill, I cannot undertake the ordering of any of my affairs, nor reſtore the money I have exacted ; if you will undertake to give account to God for my soul, and promise me absolution of my sins, I will put into your hands all my property, real and personal, so that you may do with it what may seem to you good." The abbot, perceiving the man to be truly contrite, truly penitent, replied : " I will think this over." Haſtening to the bishop, he told him all that the usurer had said, and asked for his advice. The bishop replied : " I think it is right that you should accept the property and answer for his soul, provided that you reſtore to me the treasure of my church." Immediately the abbot returned to the sick man and said : " I have thought it over, and have determined to take charge of your property, and to answer to God for your sins." The sick man answered : " Then my advice is that you bring carts at once, and carry out all my property firſt, and take me laſt of all ; then you will find no difficulty in the removal." For he had two cheſts full of silver and gold, and also very many pledges in vases, books, and various ornaments ; much corn and wine and furniture, as well as a vaſt number of cattle. Then the abbot after sending everything on before, laſt of all put the sick man himself into a carriage, and haſtened to the monaſtery ; but no sooner did the carriage enter the gates

than the invalid breathed his last. Then the abbot, not unmindful of his promise, took pains to restore the products of usury as far as he possibly could and bestowed bountiful alms for the soul of the usurer ; the rest he used for the good of the convent. The body was laid in the church, and relays of monks were appointed to sing the psalms round the bier. During the night, while the brethren were chanting earnestly, four foul spirits appeared and took up their position on the left hand side of the coffin. At this sight, all the brethren were terrified and fled in panic, except one aged monk. And behold, an equal number of holy angels placed themselves on the right hand over against the four demons. Straightway he, who seemed to be the leader of the demons, broke out into that psalm of David (Ps. xxxvi) *" My heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly: that there is no fear of God before his eyes ;* this is fulfilled in this man." Another said *" For he flattereth himself in his own sight: until his abominable sin be found out."* And the third added, *"The words of his mouth are unrighteous and full of deceit: he hath left off to behave himself wisely and to do good."* The fourth said, *He imagineth mischief upon his bed and hath set himself in no good way: neither doth he abhor anything that is evil."* Then they said all together, " If God be just, and His words true, this man is ours, because he is guilty of all these things." Answered the holy angels, "If you bring forward against him this psalm of David, go on with it." The demon said, " That is enough for us, for his damnation." To this the angels answered, " Since you are silent, we will bring forward the rest of the Psalm, which you have only begun." The first said: *"Thy mercy, O Lord reacheth unto the heavens: and Thy faithfulness unto the clouds."* To which the second angel added, *" Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains: Thy judgments are like the great deep."* Then the third: *" Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast ; how excellent is Thy mercy, O God:"* And when the fourth added, *"The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings ;"* they all broke out together : " Because God is just, and the Scripture cannot be broken, this child of man is ours ; he fled to the Lord, and

to the Lord he shall go, because he put his truſt under the shadow of His wings: *he shall be satisfied with the pleasures of His house,* for he hath bewailed himself with the tears of contrition; *and he shall drink of His pleasures as out of the river;* for *with Him is the well of life: and in His light shall he see light.*" At this word the devils were confounded and ſtricken dumb; the heavenly messengers took up the soul of the contrite sinner, and rejoiced over him.

Novice.—Which was the more helpful to this usurer, his alms or his contrition?

Monk.—This I can tell you of a certainty, that if contrition had been lacking, his alms would have profited him but little. Do you wish to hear what reception God gives to the alms of a usurer?

Novice.—Very much do I wish and desire it.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of the contrition of a usurer, who was devoured by reptiles generated by the alms he had offered.

Monk.—Through the mouths of many this ſtory has become well known in Cologne about a usurer who was buried in the church of S. Gereon the martyr. He was a rich and avaricious man, but, being at laſt touched by Divine mercy, he went to a prieſt, made his confession, and that he might appease God for his many sins, promised that he would give all his goods to the poor for His Name's sake. The prieſt replied, "Take alms of your ſtore of loaves, and fill this cheſt with them, and close it." When the cheſt was opened the next day, they found that all the loaves he had put into it as alms were turned into reptiles. Whereupon the prieſt said to him, "Do you see now how pleasing to God are the alms of usury?" The other was terrified, and said, "Sir, what muſt I do?" The prieſt replied, "If you wish to be saved, you muſt lie this night naked among those creatures." Marvellous proof of contrition! He, although he shrank with

loathing from such a bed, yet despising worms that die in his desire to escape from those that are everlasting, in fear of hell, and in longing for the heavenly home, he threw himself naked upon the reptiles. Then the priest went to the chest, closed it, and departed. When he opened it next day, he found nothing within except the man's skeleton. This was buried in the porch of the aforesaid martyr, and it is said that the bones are of so great sanctity that up to this day no living reptile has been able to pass them.

Novice.—If the very alms of usurers are turned into reptiles, what sort of worms will be born from the rest of their property?

Monk.—Worms infernal, worms undying; of whom it is said by Isaiah in the case of such persons, *Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh* (Isaiah lxvi. 24). *Beneath them the worm is spread* (Isaiah xiv. 11); their bodies will be consumed by the undying worms of hell, and their souls gnawed with the worm of conscience.

Novice.—Could then that abbot, of whom you spoke before, make the alms from the money of the usurer fruitful for his soul?

Monk.—First, as I said, he restored all the usury to the very best of his ability, and only when that was done, did he give alms of what was left. This had not been done in the present case. That this is lawful will be shown from the following example.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the contrition of Theobald, a usurer of Paris.

When Philip was King of France, the predecessor of the present[1] King, there lived in the city of Paris a very rich usurer called Theobald. At the time when he was at the

[1] Louis VIII, 1223-6.

height of his prosperity, and the possessor of untold wealth made by usury, he, by the Divine mercy, was touched with compunction, and went to Maurice the bishop, and humbly asked counsel of him. He at that time was very eagerly engaged in building the Church of Notre Dame and advised him to give all his money for the furtherance of the work. The usurer, dissatisfied with this advice, went to Master Peter the Precentor, and told him what the bishop had said. He replied: "I do not think that he has given good advice this time; go rather and tell the crier to proclaim throughout the city that you are prepared to make restitution to all from whom you have taken any more than was due." And so it was done. Then he went back to the precentor and said: "To all who came to me I have restored everything that I had taken from them, my conscience bearing witness, and still there is an abundance left." Then said the other: "Now you may give alms without fear." Dom Daniel, the abbot of Schönau, told me that, by the advice of the same Precentor, he walked through the streets of the city, naked except for a loin cloth, while a servant drove him forward with a rod, crying aloud, "Lo, this is he whom the state honoured for his wealth, who held the sons of nobles as hostages."

Novice.—From these two usurers I see plainly the virtue of contrition, because, as I judge, when its stream flows from the heart, there is no toil, no shrinking, no shame that can obstruct its channels.

Monk.—You say truth, because contrition is dried up by the fear of a small penance, has no source from whence it flows.

Novice.—Usury seems to me to be of a very defective nature, because we rarely see it last to the third or fourth generation.

Monk.—Not only is it of a defective, but even of a destructive nature, for, as you say, it quickly fails in itself, and sometimes destroys that which is mixed or associated with it.

Novice.—Give me an example.

Monk.—What I am going to tell you I heard from certain abbots of our Order, but I have forgotten the name of the place where it happened.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the money of a usurer which devoured the money of a monastery when it was placed near it.

A usurer once entrusted a certain sum of money to a cellarer of our Order to keep for him. He sealed up this money and put it in the safe by the side of the monastery money. Later when the other reclaimed his deposit, the cellarer, unlocking the safe, found that both it and the monastery money had disappeared. Now when he found that the locks of the safe were untouched, and the seals of the bags unbroken, so that there could be no suspicion of theft, he understood that the money of the usurer had destroyed both the monastery money and itself. From this it can be gathered that the property of a monastery is not only not increased, but actually diminished by the alms of usury.

Novice.—These are wonderful things which you have told me of contrition, but I want to ask you if one who has no eyes can have contrition, since without eyes he cannot weep.

Monk.—Contrition does not consist in tears but in the emotion of the heart, whose outward signs are indeed tears of the eyes, but the heart has tears of its own.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of the contrition of a certain noble, who had been blinded by Henry, Duke of Saxony.

Henry, duke of Saxony, the father of the Emperor Otto, once put out the eyes of a certain nobleman in punishment for some crime. But God in His mercy, converted the penalty of blindness into a healing medicine, and poured so great contrition into his heart, that he bemoaned his sins without ceasing and was for ever sighing in longing for his

heavenly home. He haunted the church of the Blessed Mother of God in Hildesheim, spending all his time in prayer and fasting. It happened by chance that a certain fool uttered his folly in his hearing, saying, " He, who has no eyes here, will have none in the future life, with which to see God." He was much disturbed by these words, and while he was daily lamenting and could find no comfort in anything that was said to him, some blamed him, and he answered: " Unless it can be proved to me on the authority of the Scriptures, I shall never be comforted." This was easily done by learned men of whom there was a great abundance in that city.

Novice.—Will you tell me how it was proved?

Monk.—The Saviour said to the chosen: *Not a hair of your head shall perish* (Luke xxi. 18). Upon this passage S. Augustine comments: " Can the head perish, on which no hair perishes? Can the eye perish, where the eyelid does not perish?" meaning that this is impossible. All the dead will rise again without any defect; the wicked, that they may be punished in all their members, the good, that they may be rewarded in all. This I say and confidently believe, that every man, whether he has been righteous or a sinner, if he die in the very least contrition, will see God. To which vision may our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the splendour of glory, vouchsafe to bring us, who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, world without end. Amen.

PLATE III

Capm pmũ
De institutõe
ordinis Cister
cẽsis Distinctõ
p̃ de cõuersiõe
upiens loqu
de conũsione:
illius grãm ĩ
uoco qui loqr̃
pacẽ in plebẽ
suam · ꝙ sup̃ eos suos: et in eos qui cõ
uertunt̃ ad cor. Eius est scribenda in spi
rare: calamũ gubernaẽ: mercedẽ labo
ris recõpensaẽ. Ab ipo eũ salutaris est
conũsio: qr quos potent̃ cognouit: ab his
nnsedit̃ uam suã auertit. Nouiaus.

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BOOK III

OF CONFESSION

CHAPTER I.

What confession is, of what sort it ought to be, what is its power, and what its fruit.

Since all contrition is fruitless unless it is accompanied by the desire of confession, we ought to see what confession is, of what sort it ought to be, what is its virtue, and what its fruits.

Novice.—If contrition is unsubstantial unless it contain the intention of confession, it is surely necessary to know this, especially for novices, who soon after making their vows are obliged to confess to their abbot all the sins they have committed, as you have taught me, and as I have experienced in my own case.

Monk.—Confession is so great a benefit that, by the desire of it alone, even if necessity forbid it being carried out, sins are forgiven.

Novice.—What is confession?

Monk.—You ought to know there are three kinds of confession, of praise, of faith, of sin. Confession of sin is that by which the hidden disease of the soul is laid bare in the hope of pardon. It ought to be voluntary, done without delay and dutifully, modest, general, special, individual, unvarnished, complete, discreet, self-accusing, bitter, anxious, meticulous, true, proportionate, glad, personal and frequent. I run over these qualifications briefly, and do not explain

them fully for the sake of brevity, because I want to get on to the examples.

Novice.—Has confession any authority from the Old Teſtament?

Monk.—Confession is said to be a sacrament of the Old Teſtament, declared in it by manifeſt figures, enjoined in words and confirmed by examples. The leper is judged clean or unclean by the verdict of the prieſt (Levit. xiii. and xiv.). Wherefore the Saviour said to the leper whom He had cleansed, *Go and show thyself to the prieſt* (Matt. viii. 4). In the words of this short text, there are four things which I think ought to be considered, for they are four things that ought to be especially observed in confession: namely, that it should be without delay, unvarnished, complete, dutiful, that is, that it should be made to a man's own paſtor. As if the Lord had said, *Go,* i.e. let your confession be swift and without delay, *show,* i.e. let it be unvarnished, *thyself,* i.e. that it should be complete, *to the prieſt,* i.e. that it should be dutiful. When the grace of Jesus cleanses a man inwardly by contrition, he ought to show himself to the prieſt by confession, so that he may be seen by others to be clean. That it is also confirmed by example, we have the example of David himself, who, after his sin with Bathsheba, when Nathan came to him, answered in the words, *I have sinned againſt the Lord* (2 Sam. xii. 13).

Novice.—Will you tell me which has the greater power, contrition or confession?

Monk.—His sin is not forgiven to the sinner without contrition, and this only on the condition that confession shall follow. Yet, if necessity should prevent confession, our great High Prieſt will supply that defect. Nevertheless confession is the proof of contrition, and its power and fruit I propose to set before you rather by examples than by proofs from Holy Scripture.

CHAPTER II.

Of a clerk who had violated the wife of a knight, and after his confession the devil admitted that he had been forgiven.

In a certain village there was a priest who had committed adultery with the wife of a knight who lived in the same village. This was reported to the husband, but he, though not untroubled by suspicion, yet being a prudent man and unwilling to believe evil on mere report, said nothing either to his wife or the priest, being anxious first to discover the real truth. Now it happened that, in another village not far away, there lived one who was possessed by a devil so malicious that, when people came into his presence, he would taunt them openly with any sins which had not been blotted out by true confession. All this was well known to the knight, for it was a frequent subject of conversation ; and he asked the suspected priest to be good enough to go with him to a certain conference ; and the priest agreed. When they arrived at the village where the demoniac lived, the priest, conscious of his guilt, began to be suspicious, because he knew that the man possessed by that malicious spirit lived there. Fearing for his life, if the demon should betray him, he feigned a necessity of nature, and entering a stable, prostrated himself before the feet of the knight's serving man, saying : " I beseech you for God's sake to hear my confession." The servant, when he heard the confession was terrified, and tried to raise him up ; when it was over, the priest asked for a penance : but the man very prudently replied, " What you would assign to another priest for such a crime, let that be your penance." And so going out in peace of mind, he went with the knight to the church. Here they met the demoniac, and the knight said to him, " Do you know anything about me?" He said this with the intention of preventing suspicion in the priest, and when the demon had made some reply, he added, " Do you know anything about this priest? " He answered, " I know nothing about him." This he

said in German, and immediately added in Latin, "He justified himself in the stable." There was no one else present at the time who understood Latin.

Novice.—I am sure that it was not of his own will that the devil spoke Latin then.

Monk.—He was not allowed to speak in German, lest the knight should understand and infer the hidden meaning; yet he was not permitted to keep silence that the priest might realise the value of confession.

Novice.—Great is the power of confession, since it could wipe out from the devil's memory even the crime of adultery, and could deliver the sinner from imminent danger.

Monk.—Hear further the fruit of this confession. The priest, not unmindful of the mercy shown to him, left the world, and became a monk in a monastery of our Order. He is thought to be alive still, as I learnt from a Cistercian abbot.

Novice.—The word of this wanton demon became for him a cause of great salvation.

Monk.—Another similar story was also told me.

CHAPTER III.

Also of the servant of another knight, who, having sinned with the wife of his master, after confessing the sin to a rustic in a wood, could not be betrayed by the devil.

The wife of another knight, inflamed with dishonourable passion, had sinned with her own servant; for some time this had been done in secret, but it could not be hid for ever, and came at last to the ears of her husband. But he, though deeply grieved at the report, was not a man to give full credence to gossip, and therefore kept silence, knowing that if he watched, so unspeakable a crime could not long remain hidden. Because he was a man both wealthy and of good

repute, and the reputation of his wife was so poor and dishonourable, he preferred to cover the matter with silence for a time, rather than dishonour with suspicion both himself and his wife, as well as her family and his own. Now it was a subject of common talk that there was in such a village a demoniac (I do not know if it was the same as in the last story) who spared no one, but when any came into his presence, he threw in their teeth their hidden sins and upbraided them. The knight heard this, and hoped to get at the truth through this man; so he took his servant with him and set out, the servant having no inkling of the reason of the journey. When they came to a certain wood, the knight turned off to the track which led to the village of the demoniac; then fear seized upon the serving man, for he knew that his life was forfeit, if the demon should divulge his crime. While he was thus terror stricken, and completely at a loss what to do, he heard a man cutting logs in the forest; and the Lord put it into his mind (for he had been diligently praying in that hour of trial) that confession was the best possible remedy against the imminent danger; and leaving his master as if for a necessity of nature, he went to the rustic, confessed his sin, and undertook penance. Coming back forthwith to his master, who suspected nothing of all this, they went together to the demon. When the demoniac had gazed very earnestly upon the adulterous serving man, now indeed justified from his adultery, the knight said to him: "Tell me if you know anything about this man. The demon replied: "I did know many things about him, but now I know nothing." And so by the virtue of confession the servant was delivered from death and his master from suspicion. You see the value of a true confession.

Novice.—What do you mean by true confession?

Monk.—One in which there is a firm intention to make amends.

Novice.—Suppose the penance itself is never carried out?

Monk.—If that negligence does not arise from sickness or impossibility, but the penance enjoined is treated lightly and despised, as often happens, the sin, which was lately forgiven, returns. Even if the sin were venial, and the penance

omitted through mere forgetfulness, I cannot admit that the punishment of that sin is wiped out, when there has been such forgetfulness.

CHAPTER IV.

Of a priest, who neglected the penance assigned him in confession for a nocturnal illusion, and was punished in the offending part of his body.

A priest, who was a monk in our house, and told me the story, confessed one day to a nocturnal illusion, and a single psalm was assigned him as a penance. He forgot to perform this small duty, and on the same day began to feel so great an irritation and burning, as if glowing nettles were being applied to his skin, that he was somewhat alarmed. Unable to discover any outward cause for this, he suddenly remembered the psalm he had forgotten to say; and inferring that this had been sent as a punishment for his forgetfulness, he recited the psalm, and found the pain gone. The penitent ought to be very watchful against forgetfulness. Listen to another example.

CHAPTER V.

Of a Premonstratensian clerk, who went to confront a demoniac without having confessed some venial sin, and was at once branded with it by the demon.

A certain canon in Steinvelt, of the Premonstratensian Order, as I was told by a canon of Münster, was a man of very high character, and it happened that the prior once took him with him to the entrance of the monastery that he might help

to cast out a devil from a man possessed. But as soon as he appeared, the devil cried out to him through the mouth of the demoniac, "I know something about that man, which takes away any fear of him." Yet he was not allowed to publish what it was, though it was a small matter, lest it should bring shame upon a saintly man. He, understanding well what was meant, went indoors again with uneasy conscience, confessed his fault and returned, and asked the demon if he still knew anything against him. The demon answered, "There are still some traces of your fault within you, because the bodily pain has not yet followed," meaning the discipline of the rod. Again the youth went in, received the appointed discipline, returned, and again asked if he knew anything. When the devil replied, "So far as I can tell, I have nothing against you now," the brethren were much edified.

Novice.—It is somewhat disturbing that the enemy should be able to discern the marks of sin in a holy man after confession.

Monk.—God permitted this for his good. The more perfect a man is, the more careful he must be to have his sin blotted out. The appointed discipline, which he might have received without delay, ought not to have been deferred, especially at a time when he was about to contend with the devil. For in the two preceding examples, of the priest and of the knight's serving man, whose confessions were not made duly to their own priest, nor had any outward penance yet followed, the devil could not discern any traces of sin.

Novice.—I am glad to hear what you say, that necessity was the reason. But I should like you to show me the difference between true and false confession.

Monk.—You will understand from the next examples the virtue of true confession and the uselessness of a confession that is insincere.

CHAPTER VI.

Of a virgin who was moved by a demon, under the guise of man ; also of a man in whose teeth the same demon hurled his sins after a feigned confession ; and of a girl of whom he disclosed that she was no longer a virgin.

Bernard, our fellow monk, told me that when Oliver the scholasticus of Cologne was preaching the cross in Brabant, and he was acting as his assistant, there was there a certain nun who came from Nivelle and was very proud of her vow of virginity. The devil, hating to see such virtue, took upon him the form of a man, very good looking and well dressed, appeared to her, and began to woo her with the words of a lover, offering her jewels, praising the fruitfulness of marriage and scoffing at the barrenness of virginity. The maiden, not knowing who he was, replied: " I do not intend to marry; for the love of Christ I despise and refuse any carnal nuptials." And when that wanton spirit became too importunate, she, knowing that there were many maidens more beautiful, better born and richer than she, began to suspect this false lover and said to him: " Good sir, who are you, and from whence do you come, that you desire so much to marry me?" When he showed himself unwilling to answer, she pressed him the more insistently, till at last the demon, driven by necessity, confessed openly, " I am a devil." At this she was terrified, and replied, " Why then do you demand carnal marriage, which is well known to be contrary to your nature?" And he: " Only consent, all I want from you is your consent to the marriage." To which the maiden replied: " Absolutely do I refuse to give consent to you in anything;" and she drove him away by the sign of the holy cross. She went to the priest, and disclosed to him all these attacks of the devil; and when he had urged her to give no sort of consent to the evil one, she returned to her own house. But even after her confession the demon did not altogether leave her, though now he addressed her from a distance, and vexed her by putting filth

into her plate when she was eating, and because of this sisters were assigned to her for her protection. Whatever house she entered, the demon made his presence known by speech; his voice indeed was heard by all, but he was visible only to the girl. This spirit was so malicious that he would disclose the sins of all that were present, and taunt them with their crimes; nor was any sin hidden from him, unless it had been covered by a true confession. He showed also other signs of his malice by scattering filth and broken pots full of dirt over those who were assembled there. Some of those present once asked him if he knew the Paternoster, and when he answered that he knew it very well, they asked him to repeat it. And he said, " Our Father, which art into heaven, thy name, will be done also in earth, give us this day our dailies bread, but deliver from evil." And when he had thus mutilated the prayer with omissions and barbarisms, he added, grinning: " That is how you lay folk generally say your prayers." They asked him also about the creed, and he said that he knew it excellently well, beginning thus: " I believe that God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, exists " ; and when someone said, " You ought to say, I believe in God," and he went on: " I believe God," some learned men who were present, noticing what the devil said, and understanding the force of the accusative, insisted that he should say, " I believe *in* God" but nothing would persuade him to this.

Novice.—I myself should like to know the real meaning of " I believe *in* God."

Monk.—To believe in God is to go to God in love. The demons as the Apostle James saith, *believe and tremble* (Jam. ii. 19), but they do not love. They believe that God exists, they believe that His words are true, but they do not believe in Him, because they do not love Him. But this same devil could not even begin the angelic salutation, although he professed to know it.

Novice.—How comes it, seeing that the Lord's prayer is of greater dignity than the Ave Maria, that he should be permitted to say the first and not the second?

Monk.—The Lord allowed this both for His mother's honour, and to signify the supremacy of the sacrament of His

incarnation. Of how great virtue the salutation is, as the beginning of the redemption of the human race, you will learn more fully from what will follow. When they asked this demon why his voice was so hoarse, he answered: "Because I am always on fire." The same virgin said that whenever he appeared to her he took care that she should never see his back.

Novice.—I wonder why he did this.

Monk.—Demons, as I have understood from another vision, have no hinder parts, and this is why a demon who appeared very frequently to a certain woman, when she asked him why he always walked backwards when he went away, replied: "We are allowed to take the human form, but nevertheless we have no backs."

Novice.—I am waiting for an example which will show me the difference between true and false confession.

Monk.—Here it is at once. There was in the neighbourhood a man who, while very anxious to hear the aforesaid demon, did not dare to approach him, because of certain disgraceful sins that he had committed, fearing that he would reveal them in the presence of all. Wherefore he went to the priest and confessed them, keeping in his heart all the time the intention of sinning again. Feeling more secure after this confession he went to the house, and a wonderful thing happened. As soon as he reached the door and looked in, the devil cried out: "Ah! my friend, come in, come in; I am sure you have whitewashed yourself excellently well"; and straightway before them all he told those disgraceful sins, although they had been confessed, and put him to such confusion that he profoundly wished he had never come. Made miserable by this, and driven back upon himself by his accusing conscience, he returned to the priest and told him what had happened and repeated his confession; and because now he really wished to amend his life for the future, made his promises to God and the priest from his heart. Then the priest said: "Now you may return with confidence; he will not confound you again." He did return; and when he entered the house, some of the bystanders said to the demon, "Here is your friend come back again." He answered,

"Who is it?" "Why," they said, "he whom just now you upbraided with such vile sins." But the demon replied: "I never upbraided him, neither do I know any evil of him." They, who did not know that the man had confessed, were astonished at the demon's lies; and so by the power of confession, he escaped the brand of the deepest confusion. In the same house there was a matron sitting with the others, holding her daughter under her cloak, as is the way of mothers; somehow or other she had provoked the demon, and he cried out: "Do you think that that daughter of yours sitting under your cloak is a virgin? Woe to you, for you have guarded her ill." When the woman said that he lied, he answered: "Not at all do I lie; if you do not believe me, ask Petronilla; she will tell you the truth plainly enough." For this Petronilla had been the girl's confidante in her fall. When she heard this, the mother pushed her daughter away from her angrily, saying, "Go away from me, unclean that you are; never shall you receive again any kindness from me." She, conscious of her guilt, pretended tears, and went out crying, and protesting that the devil had lied. Inspired by God, she ran to a neighbouring priest, confessed her sin, and promised that never again would she sin that way. Then at the advice of the priest, who taught her carefully what she should say, she went back to her mother who was still there, and said: "Truly, my mother, you have done me a great wrong in accusing me so vehemently without any cause, and in driving me away so pitilessly because of the words of this demon who is altogether *a liar and the father of it* (John viii. 44), and she began to weep. The mother, moved by the words and tears of her daughter, said to the demon: "Tell me, thou wicked one, why thou didst place so great a stigma upon my daughter;" and he replied: "Why, what evil have I said about your daughter? She is good and pure; I neither knew nor said any evil about her." And so the girl, like the man mentioned above, was delivered from the suspicion of fornication and restored to her mother's favour by the benefit of confession.

Novice.—How is it that the devil knew of the girl's guilt before her confession, and named Petronilla as her confidante, but did not name the man who was the author of her sin?

Monk.—I think with some confidence that he had already shown penitence for his sin, and this had taken away from the devil all knowledge of it.

Novice.—I am glad to hear that, but I remember about the virgin of Nivelle, of whom you spoke just now, and I cannot help wondering that a demon who is a spirit, should desire and seek for a carnal marriage which is against his very nature.

Monk.—There is nothing wonderful that demons should make love to women, but it is indeed marvellous that they should actually violate them.

Novice.—Do you remember that this ever happened?

Monk.—I both remember and have read such stories, and that I may caution any women who perchance may read or hear what I am about to say, I will repeat several examples which have happened in our own time. And that they may be more impressive, I will first give one short story which I read in *The Acts* of S. Bernard.

CHAPTER VII.

Example from The Acts of the abbot S. Bernard, who drove away from a woman a demon incubus.

A certain woman, in the region of Nantes, had been for six years tormented with incredible lust by a certain wanton demon to whom she had given consent. That lascivious spirit had appeared to her under the form of a very comely knight, and often abused her invisibly when her husband was lying in the same bed. In the seventh year she was seized with terror, and when S. Bernard, the abbot of Clairvaux came to Nantes, the wretched woman threw herself at his feet, confessed her horrible passion and the mockery of the demon, and besought him to come to her help. He consoled her and told her what she must do. After her confession the devil was no longer able to approach her, but nevertheless he terrified

her with words, and threatened most bitterly that after the departure of the abbot he would come back and torment her; so that he, who had been her lover, became her most cruel persecutor. When she told this to the saint, he came on the next Sunday with two bishops and lighted candles, and with the support of all the faithful who were in the church, anathematized the adulterous spirit, forbidding him henceforth in the authority of Christ ever to approach either this woman or any other in the world. When those sacramental lights were extinguished, the whole power of the demon departed, and the woman, after a general confession of her sins, made her communion and was completely set free. This happened in our own times.

Novice.—These are stupendous things.

Monk.—Hear also other examples very much like this, but still more recent.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the daughter of the priest Arnold, who was corrupted by a demon.

In the parish of S. Remigius at Bonn there lived a few years ago a priest named Arnold, who had a comely daughter, of whom he took most diligent care, and because of her beauty was so much on his guard against young men, and especially the young canons of Bonn, that whenever he left the house, he would shut her up in the upper room. One day the devil came to her under the form of a man, and began to bend her mind to his will, inwardly with secret suggestion, and outwardly with flattering speech. What need of more? The miserable creature was persuaded and corrupted, and often afterwards consented to the devil to her own destruction. One day when the priest went to the upper room, he found his daughter weeping and lamenting, and at length with great

difficulty extracted from her the cause of her grief. She confessed to her father that she had been deluded and violated by a demon, and had good reason to grieve. How far she had been driven from normal sanity, how far alienated from ordinary decency was evident from a deplorable proof she gave of the depravity of her appetite. The grief-stricken father sent her across the Rhine, in the hope that she might benefit by the change, and that the obstruction of the river might deliver her from the demonic incubus. As soon as the girl was gone, the demon appeared to the priest and shouted at him: "You vile priest, why have you stolen my wife from me? To your own hurt you have done it"; and dealt him so violent a blow in the breast, that he vomited blood, and, within three days, was dead. Our abbot is the authority for these things, and also our fellow monk Gerard, formerly scholasticus of Bonn, to both of whom the facts were well known.

CHAPTER IX.

Also of a woman of Breisach, who confessed on her deathbed that for six years she had sinned with a demon.

In the town of Breisach, near the castle of Rheineck, some twelve years ago, as was told me by our brother Arnold, who knew all the circumstances at the time, there was a woman who had been corrupted by a demon in the way related above. She was sitting one day in her shop, when she began to feel a failure of the heart, and fearing that death was upon her, she begged that a priest might quickly be sent for. Even while she was telling him of the horrible mockery of the demon under which she had suffered for seven years, in the midst of her confession speech failed her, and her soul passed. Though she had been harassed with incredible lust by the

author of luſt, she had never been willing to tell anyone, or perhaps had never dared, or, as is ſtill more likely, had found pleasure in his wickedness.

Novice.—If demons are permitted to do such things, it is vital that women should be moſt careful not to afford them any occasion or make it possible by any consent.

Monk.—Not only muſt women be on their guard againſt them, but also men, because as demons in the form of men mock and corrupt women, as has been shown, so also in the form of women, do they seduce and deceive men. If you read Vitaspatrum, you will find there how certain saintly men were deluded, dragged down and deſtroyed by the phantoms of women. I will also give you other examples, by which you will see how men have been mocked by demons under the form of women.

CHAPTER X.

Of John, Scholaſticus of Prüm, who is said to have lain with a demon.

There was a scholaſticus of Prüm, named John, who was a very learned man, but of a light and wanton character. Now according to common report, and as I have also heard from the abbot of that monaſtery, a certain woman had promised to come to him on a certain night. On the appointed night, she indeed failed to come, but a devil, in her likeness and with her voice, entered the clerk's bed; and he believing it to be the woman who was well known to him, lay with the devil. Rising early, he urged the demon, whom he thought a woman, to go, when he said, "with whom do you think you have been lying to-night?" When he replied, "with such and such a woman," the demon answered, "No indeed, but with the devil." To this John, who was a ſtrange man, replied with a ſtrange word, which modeſty forbids me to repeat, ſcoffing at the devil, and no whit diſturbed.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Henry, a citizen of Soeſt, who being carried off by a demon and deposited in a field, went out of his mind.

In the city of Soeſt was a man named Henry, whose surname was Gemma; his business was that of a wine-seller, and he had a shop some little diſtance from the house where he lived. One night when he was returning from the shop rather late according to his cuſtom, and was haſtening home with the money received for the wine, he saw the form of a woman in white robe ſtanding in the place where the citizens were wont to meet for discussion. He thought no evil of her; but when he came to the place, she caught him by the cloak and said: "My dear, I have been waiting here a long time for you; you ought to love me." He shook his cloak free of her hand, and said: "Leave me alone; I will have nothing to do with you, I am going home to my wife"; but she only insiſted the more, urging him to go with her. When she found her words of no avail, she took him in her arms, and holding him faſt, she lifted him into the air, carried him beyond the monaſtery of St. Patroclus, which is high upon the hill, and put him down in a meadow and there left him, out of his mind with terror. After an hour, he began to recover his ſtrength, and with much difficulty made his way to his house, which lay near the monaſtery, crawling upon hands and knees. When, at his knock, the family got up and sought for a light, he cried out, "Do not bring a light, I cannot bear to see it." They brought him in and laid him upon his bed, for he was very feeble, both in body and mind. For the next three nights, the demon knocked at the door in the darkeſt hours, and Henry cried out: "I know that he has come for me, it is for me that he is knocking." He lived only a year longer, weak in body and wandering in mind. This was told me by our brother, Theodoric of Soeſt, who said that it was well known in his town, where his brother is ſtill living and is a canon of the church of S. Patroclus.

Novice.—If it is possible for demons to put on human bodies and associate with men and women, as has now been shown by various examples, I wonder if it is possible for them to become parents?

Monk.—I know nothing which can answer this question of yours, but I will tell you what I have read in ancient histories.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the Huns and of Merlin, and what is the truth about the humanity of the children of incubi.

When the Goths migrated from Asia into Europe, as we read in their history, they drove out from their company all their ill-formed women, fearing that they might bear ill-formed children, and so injure the manliness of the Gothic race. When these women were thrust out of the camp, and were wandering in the woods, incubus demons came to them, and from them begat sons and daughters, from whom was derived the hardy race of the Huns. We read also that Merlin, the prophet of the Britons, was born from an incubus demon and a nun; and even the kings now ruling in Britain, which we call England, are said to be descended from a phantom mother. Yet Merlin was a reasonable man and a Christian, who foretold many future events which are day by day being fulfilled.

Novice.—If men can only be conceived and born from both parents, how can they be called men, who draw their origin partly from man and partly from demon? Will one who is not truly of human nature rise again at the Judgment?

Monk.—I will tell you what I have heard about this question from a very learned man; he says that demons collect all wasted human seed, and from it fashion for themselves human bodies, both of men and women, in which they become

tangible and visible to men. And so the authorities say that there is true human nature in those that are born from them, and that they will rise again at the Judgment as being truly men and women. But let that be enough on this subject; let us now go back to confession, from which we have digressed a little on the occasion of your question.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of Aleidis, a nun of Langwaden, who by confession was delivered from the visible attacks of a demon.

In the city of Bonn, in the diocese of Cologne, there was a priest, named Peter, the vicar of the church; and he, by some judgment of God, hanged himself on the door of his room. His concubine, whose name was Aleidis, was so terrified by his dreadful death, that she left the world and took the religious dress in a convent called Langwaden. One day when she was looking out of the dormitory window, she watched a youth, or rather a demon in the form of a youth, standing near a well close to the dormitory wall; who, when he caught sight of her, put one foot on the railing which surrounded the wall, and throwing out the other as if he were flying, placed it on the ledge of the window itself. Then he stretched out his hand, and tried to seize her by the hair, but she fell back terrified, cried out, and almost fainted. At her cry the sisters ran up, soothed her and laid her upon the bed. When they had gone away and she had a little regained her breath, and was lying alone, the demon again appeared, and began to woo her with loverlike words. But when she, realising now that he was an evil spirit, refused to have anything to do with him, he said: "Kind Aleidis, do not speak like that; only consent to me and I will give you a husband who shall be well born, honourable and upright. Why should you torture yourself with hunger in this miserable place,

and kill yourself before your time with watchings and many other similar discomforts. Go back to the world and enjoy the pleasures which God has created for man; you shall want for nothing under my protection." She answered: "I repent with all my heart that I have listened to you so long, leave me, for I will never consent." The demon hurled at her a loathsome insult and then disappeared. Now since this vile spirit continued to show himself most hostile to her by day and by night, some of the sisters persuaded her to keep holy water always at hand with which to sprinkle him when he came; and others urged her to use incense if the water failed to terrify him. Both these things she tried, but little did they profit her. For as often as he saw her make the sign of the cross against him, or sprinkle holy water at him, or burn incense, he vanished indeed for a little, but very soon returned. Then one of the other sisters, who was older and wiser, advised her to let the devil come near her, and then with a loud voice to hurl the angelic salutation at him. And when she did this, the devil fled, as if he had been pierced by an arrow or swept away by a whirlwind, and from that time never presumed to approach her again.

Novice.—Till now I wondered why the devil could not say or even begin the angelic salutation, as I remember that you told me above in the sixth chapter.

Monk.—I was just thinking of that very passage. Certainly the nun, now that she was armed with so effective a weapon, felt no longer any fear when she saw the form or heard the voice of the demon. One day when talking over these things with a certain religious, he advised her as follows: "Make your general confession to the prior, simply, fully and faithfully, as far as your memory holds, and you will be completely delivered from any further annoyance from demons." This advice pleased her much, and she went at once to the prior, and begged him to appoint time and place for hearing her confession. In the morning after Matins and due preparation, she hastened to the appointed place, which was the chapel adjoining the convent, where the prior awaited her. And behold, the demon met her as she was hurrying along the path, and said: "Aleidis, where are you going?

Whither are you hastening?" She replied: "I am going to put both you and myself to confusion." Then the demon: "O Aleidis, don't go, don't go; turn back, turn back." She said: "Often have you put me to confusion; now I am going to overwhelm you with the same. I will not go back." When he found he could not induce her to return, either by threats or blandishments, he followed her to the chapel, hovering over her like a kite. But as soon as she knelt down in the presence of the prior and began her confession, the demon vanished, crying and shrieking, and never from that moment was seen or heard by her again. You have here a plain proof of the great value of an honest confession. All this was told me by Dom Herman, the abbot of Marienstatt; who, having heard by common report about this woman, who had been well known to him when he was a canon of Bonn, went himself to the convent, and heard it all from her own lips, just as I have told you.

Novice.—If confession had not such mighty force, assuredly it would not cause the demons so great distress.

Monk.—Another example occurs to me, which will clearly show how grievously they are distressed when we confess our sins. What I am going to tell you happened after my conversion, and was told me by Dom Charles, at one time our prior, and at that time abbot of Villers; but unfortunately I have forgotten the names of the person and place. This is what he said.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of a priest deceived by the devil's prophecy of his death, and delivered by confession.

There is a certain priest (he is still living) very religious and very dear to many for the excellence of his life, who was vicar of a parish in our neighbourhood. The crafty devil

grudged him his favour with God and man, but would not molest him with open temptations, because he hoped to bend him to his will more completely under an appearance of good. He, the very minister of darkness, transformed himself into an angel of light, and came thus to the priest, and said: "Friend of God, I am sent to tell you things that are yet to come. Prepare yourself, for you will die within the year." Now the priest, having no suspicion that it was an evil angel, but believing that it would happen as he had foretold, began to prepare himself diligently as if for death, to cleanse his conscience by confession, and to discipline his body with fastings, watchings and assiduous prayers, and to distribute to the poor his income and all his small possessions. Since many asked him why he was dispersing his goods so unwisely, he told the reason to one of them only, as a confidential secret, saying: "The angel of the Lord has revealed to me that I shall die within the year." But this man, unable to keep the secret, told it to another intimate friend, and so through him it came to the knowledge of the whole parish. When the year was over, and the priest still alive, it was made plain that the devil had been a false prophet. And because *all things work together for good* (Rom. viii. 28), for God's elect, the holy man found advantage in the very point in which he had been deceived by the devil; for being made much ashamed by this crafty deceit because it had come to the ears of so many people, and having no longer anything to live upon, he left the world and his parish and took the vows in a house of our Order, whose name I have forgotten. During his noviciate, the devil came to him again and tried to excuse his former deceit by such words as these: "Be not troubled, O man of God, because you have not died, as I foretold, since God in His providence has prolonged your life that many may be edified; I am sent by Him to help, instruct and guard you." And he believed him. The devil was constantly coming to him, and as he noticed afterwards, was always exhorting him to such things as were for his ease. When sometimes fervent devotion prompted him to make longer prayers, or to keep more vigils, or to labour harder with his hands, he would argue with him saying: "Discretion is the mother of the virtues; you

have a long life before you now, and therefore you ought to spare yourself that you may the longer serve God." Or when he was trying to raise a somewhat heavy stone, the devil would say again: "That stone is too big, take this instead." When he became a monk, the devil said to him: "Ask the prior to allow you to go to tasks where you will be alone, that you may the more freely enjoy my conversation, and I yours;" and the prior gave him leave when he was told the reason. At last the devil, wishing to reap the fruits of his long-drawn-out guile, came to the monk's bed at the dead of night, woke him up and said: "Get up, the Lord wills to reward your long toil. Go to the private chamber and hang yourself on the beam there with your girdle, that so He may welcome you as a martyr." When he heard this, the monk was terror-stricken, and spat at the devil, and cried out: "Leave me, Satan, leave me; now I know who you are;" and making the sign of the cross, he put him to flight. You see how great is the Divine mercy that is always about us; God allowed the devil, under the guise of a good spirit to discipline His servant with certain subtle suggestions, although they were meant treacherously; but He did not allow him to succeed in this gross proposal, lest the simple man should be deceived, and run to meet eternal ruin. He rose at once, went to the bed of the sleeping Prior and roused him, making the sign that he wished to make his confession. The Prior suggested that he should wait till the morning, but as the other would not consent to this, he got up and went with him to the Chapter house. Immediately the monk prostrated himself at his feet and confessed how he had been deceived for a long time by the devil under the form of an angel, and how he had discovered him by the advice that he gave that he should hang himself; he confessed also his other sins. When the Prior had given him some penance and warned him to be more cautious for the future, he went back to his bed. Now the monk was obliged to go up to a private chamber, and while there he saw the devil, exasperated by his confession, standing before him with a bow at full stretch, and an arrow in position, and the evil one cried with a loud voice, "To your own hurt have you put me to confusion; lo, now I will slay

you." He answered, "Depart from me, thou accursed, for now I fear thee no longer;" and at the sign of the cross the devil vanished; and so, by the virtue of confession, the monk was delivered and saw the demon no more.

Novice.—Why is it that the demon was unable to injure this priest, whereas he had power so cruelly to slay Arnold, the vicar of S. Remigius, about whom you told me?

Monk.—He was able to corrupt the daughter of that vicar, but could not harm the virgin of Nivelle. It was clearly not without cause that the devil received so much power against both father and daughter.

Novice.—If demons are so much troubled when we confess our sins, I think they must rejoice the more when we cover them with silence.

Monk.—That is most certain. You will see it still more plainly shown in the tenth chapter of the seventh book, where by the grace of the Blessed Mother of God, the tongues of certain folk were unlocked for confession; for that book will be wholly consecrated to the honour of the Blessed Virgin.

Novice.—From what you have said, I understand clearly that confession is the medicine of the soul; now I should like to know if the body also gains health by its means in any way.

Monk.—It is the medicine of the whole man; for as it delivers the soul of the sinner from the pains of hell, so sometimes it delivers his body from temporal pains.

Novice.—I think it would be very useful for me to hear examples of this; because there are many who, if they knew that confession brought bodily relief, would be more ready to make use of it.

Monk.—Do you not remember what great things Dom Walter the Abbot of Villers told us about confession, when he came from the Diet of Frankfort,[1] in which the son of Frederick, king of the Romans, was elected to the throne?

Novice.—Well indeed do I remember, but since the human memory is apt to be treacherous, I would gladly hear again what I have already heard once, especially when they are truths necessary to salvation.

Monk.—"When I was at Frankfort," he said, "and was

[1] In 1220.

talking with Master Conrad, the Dean of Speyer, I said to him in the course of our conversation: ' There are things I have learned about confession which you, as preachers, ought to know ' " (for he was preaching the cross at that time) and he begged me to repeat them to him. This was the tenor of them.

CHAPTER XV.

Of a clerk of Arras and his sister, and how the latter was delivered from the flames by confession, when both of them had been concerned in the death of a silversmith.

A few years ago there lived at Arras a certain clerk, a native of the place, and brought up there in comfort from his infancy, and mixing with honourable clerks. His mother's income began to fail, and as he had no clerical stipend he was ashamed to continue living with her. Impelled by an evil spirit, he went with treacherous intention to the house of a wealthy silversmith and said to him: " A certain rich merchant has come to my house, and wishes to buy cups and goblets of silver, and other small vessels or ornaments made of silver or gold. If you care to sell any thing of this sort, put them in a sack, and come to my house at such an hour, alone, because he wishes the transaction to be kept secret." The silversmith, having no suspicion of a clerk who was well known to him, did as he was asked, but nevertheless told his servants where he was going. When the clerk saw him coming alone, he hid behind the door, and as he entered, clove his skull with an axe, and killed him. Then with the help of his sister, a young girl who lived with him, he cut up the corpse limb by limb, and threw the pieces into the sewer. But when it grew late and the jeweller did not return home, some of his household went

to the clerk's house and asked where their master was ; and both of them answered that he had not been there. The others were not satisfied with this reply, and looking round suspiciously, they discovered traces of blood, and immediately charged them with murder. When the officers came and found not only traces of bloodshed but also the sack of treasure, the guilty pair could no longer make any pretence of denial; and sentence was quickly passed that they should both be burnt to death. What need of more? On the way to their punishment, the girl said to her brother : " Brother, I am now being taken to death on your account, for I should never have helped in this murder except to try and conceal your crime. Now however as we cannot escape immediate death, let us make confession of the crime, that we may at least escape the death eternal." The clerk, angered by these words, because he was utterly desperate, answered : " I will not do it ; how could so late a confession be of any use to me? " And finding her brother hardened, the girl asked for a priest, and confessed her crime to him with much contrition. Then both were bound to one stake, and great quantities of fuel were piled around them. Wonderful power of confession, wonderful mercy of the Saviour ! the flames at once devoured the despairing clerk, but the fire neither touched nor injured nor gave any pain to the girl. Only her chains were burnt, as we read of the Three Children, so that she could walk freely ; nor did she feel the heat of the flames otherwise than as the breathing of a dewladen wind. The judges, seeing so great a miracle, decreed the girl to be innocent, and ordered her to be set free ; and so by her confession she escaped the burning of that fire.

Novice.—What do you think about that clerk?

Monk.—Exactly as the despairing murderer Hildebrand in the sixth chapter of the preceding book judged about himself : " I am eternally damned," he said, " and appointed to everlasting flames chiefly because of my despair. If I had shown penitence by confessing my sin, I should have escaped eternal punishment through that which was temporal." The same abbot told us of another miracle in which the virtue of confession was still more plainly shown ; as follows :

CHAPTER XVI.

Of heretics who were examined and convicted by the trial of white hot iron at Cambrai, one of whom was saved by the help of confession.

In the cathedral city of Cambrai within the last five years several heretics were arrested, who all denied their heresy through fear of death. A clerk was sent by the bishop to examine by the trial of white hot iron, those who denied and to sentence as heretics all those who were burnt. They were all examined and the iron burnt them all. When they were being taken to their punishment, one of them, a man of noble birth, was kept back by the clerk in the hope that he might perhaps be brought to penitence. And he said to him, "You are not one of the common herd, and I am filled with pity for you, and with compassion for your soul. I beg and beseech you to return to your senses after so much wandering, and come back from error to the truth, that you may not pass through temporal death to find the death everlasting." He answered, "I have learnt by experience that I was wrong; if so late a penitence could profit me, I would willingly make my confession." The other replied that true penitence could never be too late and sent for a priest. The man confessed his error, promising with his whole heart that he would give satisfaction to God, if his life were spared. That the merciful Lord might show the power of confession, no sooner did the penitent begin to confess his sins that the burn in his hand began gradually to shrink, and decreased in proportion as the confession proceeded, as the clerk saw with his own eyes. When half the confession was completed, half the wound was healed, but when the whole was finished, the virtue of confession removed the whole burn both in pain and appearance, and the hand recovered its former health. The officer came to take the man to the fire, but the clerk asked him why he had come. "That he may burn," he said, "because his hand was burnt in the examination." Then the clerk, showing

the man's hand perfectly whole, set him free, while the others were consumed in the flames. When Master Conrad heard this, he said to the abbot, " I too will tell you a similar story, which I remember happened a few years ago in Argentina.

CHAPTER XVII.

Also of ten heretics in Argentina, who were examined and burnt, one of whom, after he had been healed by confession and set free, was led astray again by his wife, and condemned to the re-kindled fire.

Ten heretics were arrested in Argentina, that is Strasburg. They denied their heresy, but were convicted by the trial of white hot iron, and were condemned to be burnt. On the appointed day, when they were being taken to the stake, an officer said to one of them: " Miserable man, you are condemned to death, but show penitence even now by confessing your sins, lest, after the burning of your body, which is but momentary, the fire of hell should burn your soul for ever." When the other said: " I know well that I was wrong, but I fear that penitence in such an extremity would not be acceptable to God ; " he replied: " Only confess from your heart, God is merciful, and will receive the penitent." Then a wonderful thing happened ; as soon as the man confessed his heresy, his hand became completely whole again. Since his confession had occupied some little time, the officer came to hurry him to the stake, but the priest said " It is not right that an innocent man should be unjustly condemned." And as no trace of the burn could be found in his hand, he was set free. Now this man had a wife who lived a little way out of the city, and was altogether ignorant of what had happened ; and when he came to her rejoicing and said: " Blessed be God, for He has delivered me this day from the

death both of body and soul ; " and went on to tell her of all that had taken place, she replied : " O most unhappy one, what have you done, what have you done? Why have you deserted our sound and holy faith for a momentary pain? you ought rather to have suffered your body to be burnt a hundred times, if that were possible, than once to abjure so well proved a faith. But alas ! who is safe from the wiles of the serpent? " Then he, forgetful of the mercies that had been shown him from heaven, forgetful of so evident a miracle, fell in with the advice of his wife, and returned to the old heresy. But God, not unmindful of punishment for such base ingratitude, smote both in the hand ; the wound of the burning was restored to the hand of the heretic, and his wife, because she had been the means of renewing his heresy, was made a sharer in the renewal of his pain. So violent was the burning that it penetrated even to the very bones of their hands. And since in that place they did not dare to utter the cries which were drawn from them by the violence of their pains, they fled into the neighbouring wood, howling there like wolves. What need of more words? Information was given, they were brought back to the city, and together were placed in the fire, which had not wholly died down, and there were reduced to ashes.

Novice.—Only justice was shown to these sinners.

Monk.—Those who fight after an honest confession earn victory and freedom from condemnation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of a knight who because of his confession won a duel in the presence of the Emperor Henry.

When the Emperor Henry,[1] father of the present Frederick, last entered Lombardy, a certain castellan was accused

[1] Henry VI, 1190-1197.

before him by the Lombards of rapine and many other outrages. The accusers brought with them a very ſtrong pugiliſt, of gigantic size, who challenged him to single combat. The Emperor was unwilling to deny them juſtice, and ordered the knight to appear. When that giant challenged him to the combat according to civil law, the knight's brother fell down at the Emperor's feet, and with many tears obtained the boon of being allowed to fight on behalf of his dearly loved brother. He prepared himself moſt carefully by contrition, confession and prayer, and placed all his hope upon Chriſt, whose cross he wore on dress, shield and hand, as a defence in the fight ; for he was a man more graceful than ſtrong. The pugiliſt, terrible to see and looking like a second Goliath, rushed upon him and ſtruck him so mighty a blow upon the shield, that you would have thought that it thundered. But the knight, returning blow for blow, ſtruck his hand, before he could withdraw it, with so much force that he could not raise again his drooping club ; and then ſtriking the pugiliſt with redoubled blows, he conquered the unconquerable, through the virtue of confession. Our Brother Henry, who was present, told me that the pugiliſt broke out into these words, shouting like a bellowing ox : " Woe is me ! how can I be so vilely put to confusion by a pigmy like this ! " And thus by the humble confession of his brother a man worthy of death escaped death and won the victory. That confession also brings pardon to those who ought to be condemned the following example will show.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of a thief at Cologne, who escaped death by the benefit of confession.

About the time that I was a ſtudent, there was a thief who was kept in prison before the Gate of Mars in Cologne. A prieſt named Euſtace, a man of very exemplary life, who was

in charge of the chapel of that Gate, visited him, heard his confession, and helped him with his alms ; and, as the same priest told me himself, used often of set purpose to send him his own cup from his own table. The gaolers saw all these things and were astonished ; and when they informed the judges of the honour shown by the priest to such a thief, they thought the man must be innocent, and set him at liberty.

Novice.—Why do not benefits of this kind come to all through confession?

Monk.—It would not be expedient, because it would be an occasion of sin to many. God wills that miracles should sometimes take place through confession, that He may show by outward signs of how great value it is, as a medicine to the soul. His will is that in most cases the guilty man should be punished after confession that he may escape punishment in the future, because He does not punish twice for the same fault (Nahum i. 12). Of this I will tell you a manifest example, which I heard from an abbot of our Order.

CHAPTER XX.

Also of a thief who received the sentence of death from the bishop of Liège, because of a verse in the 106th Psalm.

In the city of Liége there was a bishop, a holy and God-fearing man. One day in Lent when he was sitting alone in his chapel, and reading the Psalter, he came to this place in the 106th psalm, *Who can express the noble acts of the Lord, or show forth all His praise?* An officer of his court came in and interrupted his devotions, saying: "Sir, what are your orders with regard to that criminal?" The bishop, moved with pity, answered: "Spare the poor fellow out of respect for the sacred season of Lent." As the officer was going away to set the guilty man free, the bishop turned

back his eyes to the interrupted psalm, and forthwith they fell upon the next verse: *Blessed are they that always keep judgment: and do righteousness.* The bishop, terrified by this message as if he had been reproved and instructed by an answer from heaven, as indeed was the case, called back the officer and said: "Examine the case of this man carefully, and judge him according to justice." Thus the guilty man lost his life owing to that inspired verse. It may be that he died contrite, and if he had lived longer, would only have become worse and would have incurred eternal death; as we said above about the Strasburg heretic, who through confession had been healed and afterwards fell back into error.

Novice.—It is a great comfort to me to hear this.

Monk.—Confession is the best remedy in danger even upon the broad sea.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of pilgrims who were in great danger on the sea because of the sins of one man, but were delivered by his confession.

Master John of Xanten, when he was preaching the cross in the churches, told the people that some pilgrims who were once crossing the sea to the help of the Holy Land, were confronted in mid-ocean by a storm so violent that the ship itself was covered with the waves. The wind roared, rough waves beset them, the bravest men were staggered, and all hope forsook the sailors. Seeing death before their eyes, they began one by one, each to his neighbour, to make confession of their sins; and rightly, for the Lord had raised up this tempest because of the sins of one man. For there was in that ship a man most wretched and most foul, whose sins were so grievous, so shameful, so revolting, both in number and in kind, that not even the sea itself could endure their weight.

As it is the habit of nature to cast forth any poison from the body, how can it quietly endure the presence of such spiritual poison as sins against its Creator? That sinner, fearing both for his life and soul, and realising that all the rest were in danger because of him, stood up and said: "Listen, brothers, listen. If this storm has arisen on account of sin, I am the cause of all the danger, and I beg you to hear my confession." Whereupon in a general silence he began to pour forth in a loud voice so terrible a flood of poison as to disgust the most hardened human ear. But see the wonders of God's mercy; as soon as he had cast forth by confession that load of iniquity, the raging sea grew quiet and there was a great calm, so that all men marvelled. Wonder followed wonder; directly the ship came to land, God wiped out from the memory of each all the sins they had heard. So long indeed as they were confined to the ship, He allowed the sinner to be abashed in their presence, but as soon as they disembarked, He shed oblivion over them, that they should not make known his sins or upbraid him. They remembered well enough that they had been in great danger on the sea and that the man had confessed something, but they were altogether ignorant of what he had said; a fact which he found out for himself by experience.

Novice.—That is a beautiful story: yet it seems a marvellous thing that God should afflict so great a number of men for the sins of one.

Monk.—We read in the Scriptures that the sea was troubled and his shipmates brought into great peril because of the disobedience of Jonah, and that when he was thrown overboard the sea became calm. For, as sometimes God afflicts for a reason a number of people for the sin of one, so also does He often spare many for the righteousness of one. Of this there are many examples.

Novice.—I know that nothing happens without the just judgment of God; but surely it is the height of madness for a man, who knows himself to be in mortal sin, to dare to run into danger.

Monk.—Those who know the healing virtue of confession ought not for a single day to remain in their sins, nor to delay

their confession unless it is impossible to find a confessor. Hear what a certain bishop said of this ; it is a saying both useful and solemn, well worthy to be remembered.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of an English bishop, who at the approach of death, refused to confess for the sake of example.

I learnt from an abbot this story of an English bishop, who died lately ; he was of the Premonstratensian Order, a good man and of deep piety. When he was now at the point of death, and did not ask for a confessor, his chaplains said to him : " Sir, you are very ill ; will you not make your confession? " The bishop replied : " No, thank you." When they continued to urge it, he added : " Do you suppose, you foolish ones, that I should put off my confession to a time like this? " They said again : " But you used to share in the king's counsels "; and he answered : " I was in the presence of the king only as Christ was in the presence of Pilate." This is what that saintly bishop said and did for an example to others. Daily had he been accustomed to cleanse his conscience, and not to put off his confession from day to day as many do. Even after his death he was illustrious for many miracles.

Novice.—As I gather from the words of this bishop, it is not right even for saintly men to postpone confession.

Monk.—This postponement of confession recalls to my mind a case which happened in our midst last year.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of one of our monks, who when actually dying made full confession for the first time.

One of our elders, whose name I will not give, had the habit, as many others have, of frequently renewing his confession, so that the abbot thought it was general, because he used to relate his sins from boyhood up to old age. He had been ill for some time before his death, but suddenly he collapsed and lost all power of speech. We all ran to his aid, and anointed him with the holy oil. The lord abbot came to him on, I think, the following day, and at his coming God's mercy unloosed the tongue of the dying man, and he began the confession of certain mortal sins committed before his conversion, sins which he had never confessed to him before. Terrified, the abbot asked him if he had ever before confessed these sins. "Yes," he said, "I have told them to other abbots." He had had three abbots before this one, and as our abbot told us, this was the reason why the Lord, who had regard to his long life of toil, opened his mouth that his confession might be complete.

Novice.—If he had confessed these mortal sins to other abbots, was it for shame that he did not confess them in the same way to the last abbot?

Monk.—As I said in the first chapter of this book; as a confession ought to be unvarnished, and made as a matter of duty, so it ought also to be complete, that is, not distributed among several confessors. What profit is it, as Bede says in his commentary upon Luke, if the whole city be guarded and one opening left through which the enemy can enter? Indeed I trust that he had made complete confession to one of the abbots, because he was a wise man, and we saw in him many virtues.

Novice.—If the penitent should sin with his confessor, would it be possible to confess those sins to him to any purpose?

Monk.—Such a confession would be nothing, because in

it there would be no shame nor would there be any sins disclosed. For an example and to answer your question, I will tell you of a certain pitable case which took place a few years ago, which the Lord Abbot of Citeaux related in place of a sermon to all the abbots in General Chapter, and asked that each would tell it to his monks as a warning.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of a confessor who sinned in the company of a young monk, and after death exhorted him to confession.

He said that in a certain monastery there had died lately a priest, upon whom his abbot, because of his exemplary life, had laid the burden of hearing the confessions of his Brethren ; but he did not tell us the name of either the monastery or the individual. There was in the same house a young monk who came to him frequently, with whom, at the instigation of the devil, and with the consent of human frailty, this confessor sinned once, but only once. As soon as it was done, he began to lament and weep bitterly, and said to the younger man : " We have sinned grievously ; we cannot for very shame confess this sin to others ; but I think that you had better make confession to me, and I to you, and each receive penance from the other." To this proposal the other agreed, and they confessed their sin in turn, and each received from the other a much severer penance than would have been imposed by the abbot or any other confessor. Soon after the priest fell ill, even to death, and when he was very near his end, in fear of hell he disclosed the sin of both, but did not reveal the name of his partner. After his death, the abbot was greatly distressed because he could not discover the other sinner. Nevertheless he said to himself : " He will come to confess to me, whoever he is." Meanwhile the dead man

appeared in broad daylight to the young monk when he was alone, ghaſtly in face, and clad in ragged gown. When he saw him, he recognised him at once, and shrank away in terror. But the apparition said: "Stay, do not be afraid, for I have come for your sake, that I may tell you how I fare." The youth, comforted and reassurred by his words, asked him whence he came and what he sought, and he replied: "I am suffering the greateſt pains because of that sin which I committed with you; for I am tormented by a fiery chain which encircles my body, and holds me suspended in the air. That confession that we made to each other profited me nothing, because it was, as a confession, juſt nothing; and I should have been eternally damned if I had not made my fault known at the laſt." And when the youth said to him: "Is there anything which could possibly help you?" he replied: "If you will confess your sin simply and fully, you will help me much; but if not, eternal punishment is reserved for you;" and so vanished. The youth, terrified by this vision, would have made his confession at once, but could not because of the absence of the abbot. But this inevitable delay gave time for his fear to die down and his reluctance to increase, and when the abbot returned, shame had so far regained the upper hand, that he made no confession to him. But the abbot had not forgotten the fault confessed to him, and when the daily expected penitent did not come, he pondered deeply how he might catch and save him who, to his own hurt, was lying hidden; and he gave orders to the whole convent, both prieſts and those of inferior rank, whether whole or sick, that on a certain feſtival all should communicate at the high altar; for he thought that the man who was guilty of that fault would surely not dare to approach. So he sat by the altar and watched the faces of each. Now the young monk, feeling sure that this was done on his account, and fearing to be discovered if he held back, came with the others; but when he drew near to the altar, so great a horror swept over him, so great a fear fell upon him, that, presumptuous as he was, he could not go on, and was soon compelled to withdraw. Then he came to the abbot, and made him the sign that he wished to confess;

and he, rejoicing and exulting, said to himself: "Ah, we have surely caught the quarry, we have found the prey; for this is he;" and he rose up and went with him into the Chapter house. There the youth threw himself at his feet, confessed his sin, recounted the vision, and received his penance, and so, laid bare by the prudence of the physician, the wound of the foolish sick man was healed. These things were related to us by Dom Gevard our abbot, when he came back from the General Chapter.

Novice.—It is a great gift of God that dead men should thus exhort the living to confession.

Monk.—So great a benefit is confession that even the spirits of the dead make use of it; often have I heard that the dead have appeared in dreams to the living, and have confessed the sins for which they were held in pains, and have truly shown by what works of mercy they could be delivered; and this has been proved afterwards by unmistakable signs. For like consorts with like, and the body of a sleeper is not far from death, and when the outward man is at rest, his soul is often more keenly awake. Not always are dreams vain, but sometimes they are heavenly revelations, like those of the patriarch Joseph, of Daniel, of Joseph espoused to Mary and of the three Magi.

Novice.—Will you show me an example of how the spirits of the dead confess to the spirits of the living?

CHAPTER XXV.

Of a novice who confessed to his abbot in his dreams.

Monk.—A young novice had been received into a house of our Order, and after a short time had fallen grievously sick, and died. Now he had not yet carried out the custom

of the Order, and made his general confession to the abbot, because that prelate was called away. While with great eagerness he was looking for him to return, and still he did not come, he made his confession to the Prior, and so died before the abbot's return. That same night when the abbot was asleep in one of his granges, and knew absolutely nothing of the death of the novice, the spirit of the dead man bowed his head at the bedside of the abbot and humbly implored him to hear his confession. (That abbot is said to have been S. Hugo of Bonnevaux, who is now beginning to be illustrious for his miracles.) When he told the novice that he would willingly hear him, he confessed all his sins to him in the same order and fashion as he had confessed them to the Prior. His contrition was so great, that as he bent over and made his confession, his tears seemed to fall upon the abbot's breast. When the confession was finished, he uttered these words: "Now, my father, I depart with your blessing, because I could not be saved, until I had made my confession to you." At this the abbot awoke, and wishing to know if the vision were real, or merely a phantasm, as often happens, touched his robe that was about his breast, and found it all wet and besprinkled with the droppings of tears. Then greatly wondering, he returned home and told the Prior his dream, and he answered "The vision was a true one, and the confession most real."

Novice.—Why did the novice say that he could not be saved without such a confession, when it was no contempt but necessity only that had prevented him from making it to his proper confessor? If he died contrite, he must have already been amongst the saved; and if not, no confession after death could help him.

Monk.—I think that God willed that his words and acts should show how greatly pleasing to Him is confession that is done as a duty, that is, one which is made to the right confessor. But that he said that he could not be saved, I understand that he meant that he could not be so swiftly delivered from purgatory. Of conferences of this kind made by the dead with the living you will hear much in the twelfth book. Do not be troubled that I said that the spirits of just

men have confessed their sins after death since even evil spirits are related to have used confession.

Novice.—I should like to hear about their confession.

Monk.—What I shall tell you is not what I have read, but what I have heard from other Religious.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the confession of a demon.

Once in Lent, when a priest was sitting in church, and hearing the confessions of his flock, some going away and others coming, there was standing among those still waiting, one, who appeared to be a young and stalwart man, also awaiting his turn. When all the rest had been dealt with, he came up last of all, knelt down before the priest, and began his confession. He enumerated so many enormous crimes, so many murders, thefts, blasphemies, perjuries and sowings of discord, of which he said that he had been the author, incentor or suggestor, that the priest, oppressed with horror and weariness, said to him: "If you were a thousand years old, you could hardly have committed so many grievous sins"; and he answered: "but I am more than a thousand years old"; then the priest still more terrified, said: "Who then are you?" and he replied: "I am a demon; one of those who fell with Lucifer. I have confessed only a very small part of my sins; if you are willing to hear the rest, which are innumerable, I am ready to confess them to you." The priest, knowing that the wickedness of the devil was incurable, said: "What have you to do with confession, O devil?" The demon replied: "I was standing opposite you, and I saw sinners come to you and go away justified, and I listened very eagerly to what they said and you replied, and I heard mercy and eternal life promised to them even after grievous sins. Then I, in hopes of gaining the same boon, came to you to confess my sins." But the

priest, following the example of S. Martin, answered the devil faithfully and said: "If you are willing to take my advice, and to do penance honestly for your sins, like those whom you have just seen go out from hence, then you too may win the same mercy." The demon replied: "If you will appoint me a penance that I can bear, I will obey you." "I will lay upon you," said the priest," a penance very light, and much less than the penances of those who made their confessions before you. Go, and three times a day throw yourself upon the ground, and thus lying prostrate say: O Lord God, my Creator, pardon me for I have sinned against Thee. Let this alone be your penance." But the devil replied: "I cannot do that; it is too hard for me." "Why do you find a mild penance too hard?" "I cannot," he answered, "humble myself so greatly before Him. Whatever else you lay upon me, I will undertake willingly." Then the priest was filled with anger, and said: "O devil, if the pride of your heart is so great, that you are neither able nor willing to humble yourself to this moderate extent before your Creator, depart from me, for neither now nor ever will you obtain mercy from Him;" and at these words the demon immediately vanished.

Novice.—A wonderful thing that this proud spirit could humble himself before a man, and not before his Creator. When the sinner has both mouth and tongue wherewith to speak, is it enough for him to make his confession in writing?

CHAPTER XXVII.

How it is not enough to make a confession in writing except in case of necessity.

Monk.—It does not seem to be enough, because *with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom. x. 10). If a man has already confessed his sins orally, he may afterwards

intensify his confusion of face by the written word, as public penitents do, or as we read that S. Augustine did in his book of *Confessions*. That scholar of Paris, about whom we spoke above in the tenth chapter of the second book, because he could not speak for sorrow, supplemented this defect with writing.

Novice.—Then what is that which we read in the Life of S. John Eleymon, that a certain woman wrote out her sins on a paper which she sealed and gave to the saint, and gained pardon without oral confession, though it was shame only that prevented her from speaking?

Monk.—Something similar may be read in the Life of S. Aegidius, about the Emperor Charles, but miracles are not to be taken as examples for ordinary life. Be sure of this that there is no authorisation for written confessions.

Novice.—May I ask again if a penitent ought to divulge to his confessor the name of a partner in his sin?

Monk.—Certainly not ; the *Penitentiary*[1] expressly forbids this.

Novice.—Why is it forbidden?

Monk.—On account of the various evils that might follow. Supposing there was a confessor who should be led to look with contempt upon the person thus mentioned, though that person might already have been justified by penitence, or should incur any other temptations through that indiscretion.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

That it is not lawful for a penitent to reveal the partner of his sin, and an example of a clerk and a nun.

A certain youth fell sick, and confessed, under the compulsion of necessity, to a fellow canon, who was not yet a

[1] Liber Poenitentialis.

priest, that he had been led astray by a certain nun, and had kissed her ; and he was asked if he had actually sinned with her. He replied, " No," but went on to say that she would have made no objection, since she had often invited him even with words, and here he spoke her name. From that time the confessor always held this nun in contempt in his heart, nor could he love and respect her as much as before. There are also other dangers ; the penitent might reveal such a name as to cause perpetual enmity between himself and the confessor.

Novice.—For instance?

Monk.—If the penitent were to say: Sir, I have sinned with your sister, your daughter or your concubine, I think that the confessor could scarcely help being troubled.

Novice.—Will you give me an example?

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of a clerk of Soest who confessed to a priest that he had sinned with his concubine.

Monk.—A certain priest of Soest had a concubine with whom a young man fell in love and sinned ; in Lent he came to the priest and confessed the sin, and disclosed the identity of his partner. When the priest heard this, he was greatly troubled, and wishing to draw him away from this attraction, upbraided him harshly, exaggerated the fault and imposed upon him too severe a penance. This rancour was not without danger. Whence could arise so harsh a reproof and so excessive a penance except from the divulging of the identity? This was told me by our Brother, Theodoric of Soest, who knew both the priest and the youth. The penitent therefore ought not to reveal the name of the partner of his sin, while at the same time he is bound to confess whatever is an aggravation of his fault.

Novice.—I should like to be instructed in the way he ought to have spoken.

Monk.—He should have used some form like this: Sir, I have sinned with the wife, daughter, concubine or sister of an acquaintance, relation, friend or enemy of mine, my own wickedness alone being the cause, or her allurements: and so with other sins, whether carnal or spiritual. A woman also should speak in the same way. Certain sins however are committed in such a way that they can scarcely be explained unless the confessor knows who the person is; but too much attention should not be paid to that.

Novice.—What if two should conspire against their prelate, and one of them, led by repentance, should confess his sin to this prelate, ought he to divulge the name of the other, or not?

Monk.—I see danger on all hands. If he does not reveal the identity, the prelate may be endangered; if he does, perhaps he may arouse in him undying hatred against the conspirator. Listen to an example very necessary for a warning.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of an abbot who persecuted a monk because he learnt from the confession of another that he knew of his vices.

An abbot of a monastery well known to me was stained with a certain vice; and he discovered from the confession of one of his monks that another monk knew of this; and at the instigation of the devil he began secretly to persecute this other, fearing that he might accuse him at the Visitation.[1] Now when he desired to send him to a distant convent under some pretext or other, the monk, understanding well the reason of this persecution, replied to the abbot: "Sir, I have

[1] Cf. Book I. i.

done no wrong to my monastery; if you wish to send me to our mother,[1] I will go ; but if not, I will wait here for the Visitor." He knew well that he would not send him to Citeaux, lest perchance he should disclose his secret. These things were told me by an elder monk of the house where they occurred. If that abbot persecuted an innocent man so harshly, how do you think he would have persecuted a conspirator against him? You see how each was imperilled, the abbot by persecuting, the monk by labouring under very grievous temptation.

Novice.—Are there any cases in which it is lawful for a penitent to reveal the name of another?

Monk.—I asked this very question of Master Herman, Dean of Bonn, a man of great learning; and he replied: " If it were such a person, of whom the penitent was sure that he would never confess their common sin, he ought certainly to disclose his name lest he should perish by silence "; and he told me a very useful example of this.

CHAPTER XXXI.

That it is lawful for the penitent in some cases to reveal the name of the other person, and an example in a case of adultery.

When I was vicar, he said, of Little S. Martin's in Cologne, one of my parishioners, a worthy man, went one day alone to the house of a fellow citizen and friend of his, and found his wife alone in the solar,[2] and being inflamed by her embraces and kisses, sinned with her without any premeditation. He ran at once to me as if he had taken poison, drank from the fountain of confession, cast out the poison, received penance, and then added: " Sir, I will tell you her name, for she is a vile woman and corrupts many, and I am sure that she will

[1] Citeaux.

[2] Solarium—upstairs sitting-room.

never confess her sin willingly." In Lent however she did come, more from habit than contrition, and confessed to me some trivial daily sins, but was altogether silent about the adultery. I did not forget the sin confessed to me by the other, but because I did not wish to overwhelm her with confusion, nor to betray the penitent, I only said: "Lady, go away now and come back to-morrow; meanwhile say the Lord's prayer three times, that God may deign to illumine your heart, that you may make your confession fully and worthily." She went away, and came back next day, but only repeated the sins she had confessed before. When I told her to go away the second time, and repeat the same prayers as before, she obeyed not without suspicion, and returning on the following day, brought with her a clerk who was her relation, and in his hearing broke out into these words: "Here is that priest," pointing at me with her finger, "who charges me with adultery; I will complain of him to my lord the bishop." She continued to upbraid me, but I was altogether undisturbed, and when we were alone together, I said very gently: "Good lady, why do you hide your sin, and why do you deny what you have just said? Is it not true that you committed adultery in such a place with such a man?" She, understanding that I was not ignorant of her crime, came back at length to her senses, and replied with much humility: "Sir, it is true; I did commit adultery with the man you mention, and I am ready to do penance, and to live chastely for the future." Thus it came about that she, who came as a sinner, went down to her house justified through the perseverance of her vicar. If the penitent had not betrayed her, perhaps she would never have been justified.

Novice.—If it is not lawful for the penitent to reveal the name of his partner except in a case such as this, what do you think about the confessor? May he in any case disclose the sins of his penitents, or their names?

Monk.—In many cases he may disclose the sins of his penitents, if they themselves remain silent; but he may not disclose their names, except in the one case which was, some five years ago, decided by Pope Innocent in the following way.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of a monk who celebrated without having been ordained, and how, by the decree of Pope Innocent, it is lawful to reveal the name of such a person, if he be unwilling to confess of his own accord.

In a certain house of the Cistercian Order a monk once celebrated without having been ordained. One day he told this to his abbot in confession, and yet refused to cease from such presumption. The abbot, in great sorrow and with many tears, besought, warned and ordered the wretched man to desist from so great a blasphemy, but without any success; for he feared to be discovered if he suddenly ceased, and so went on as before. In the following General Chapter, the abbot brought forward this case, asking what a confessor should do, if perchance any such thing should take place in a monastery. And since neither the abbot of Citeaux, nor the other abbots, dared to give any decision on this, they sent an account of the case to Pope Innocent. He called together his cardinals and learned men, laid the case before them and asked what decision each one would make. Nearly all of them agreed that the confession ought not to be revealed, but he replied: "I decide that the confession ought to be revealed in such a case, because such a confession is no confession at all, but sheer blasphemy; and the confessor has no right to conceal so infamous a madness, which might bring disaster upon the whole church." All agreed to his decision; and he wrote to the Chapter what he had determined, and how it was approved by the Cardinals. Nor ought you to doubt that confessors are sorely tormented when they have been told any such thing, whose responsibility they feel unable to bear by themselves.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A long and useful story about the lay-brother Simon of Aulne and his prophecies.

Not long ago, a monk confessed to his prior a very grievous sin; of what nature it was I do not know, but when the prior wished to refer it to the abbot according to custom, the monk refused his consent. This refusal so weighed upon his mind, since he felt himself unable to bear alone the responsibility of the sin confessed to him, that the prior began to waste away in body through sheer sadness of heart. Brother Simon of Aulne, a lay-brother well known to me, having learnt of this by the Holy Spirit, said to the prior: "Sir, what ails you? Why are you thus pining away?" When he replied: "I am full of sadness," Simon said: "Do not be so distressed; I know well the cause of your sadness, but the Lord will soon give you comfort." Then he went to the monk and said: "Why do you not confess your sin to your abbot? God has revealed it to me, and if you do not confess it to him as your appointed confessor, I myself will disclose it." The other, knowing the sanctity of the laybrother, then confessed his sin to the abbot, though moved rather by fear than devotion; and so the prior was delivered from his trouble.

Novice.—I think that man must have the spirit of prophecy.

Monk.—In truth he has the spirit of prophecy, if he is still alive, as you will learn from what follows. A certain secretary of the Roman Curia, who had heard from many that this brother Simon possessed the spirit of prophecy, in his desire to see him came from Rome to the monastery of Aulne, wishing to make his confession in his presence, hoping to be corrected by him if he omitted anything, and helped if he did not speak fully enough. As he did not find him at the abbey, he was conducted to Colomies, one of the monastery granges, of which he was master. As soon as Brother Simon saw him, he understood the reason of his

coming, and said: "Sir, I have to go to such a place on the business of our house, and if you will wait here for me, I shall be ready to satisfy you every wish on my return." He went and returned, and when he had heard from the clerk what he already knew, he sent to the monastery and asked that a discreet confessor might be sent to him; and while this clerk in the presence of the lay-brother, was making his confession to him with much devotion, and happened to pass over several things in forgetfulness, or to explain all the circumstances somewhat less fully from shame, the aforesaid Simon would interrupt his confession and say: "Why have you left out such and such sins? These things you did at such an age, and those in such a place from mere thoughtlessness, and some you did under compulsion; correcting him everywhere in such marvellous fashion that with the queen of the south he confessed that *the half was not told him* (1 Kings x. 7) of all his wisdom. Then going back to Rome, he extolled his prophet through all the Curia to such an extent that the Lord Pope Innocent sent for him to his General Council, and asked him several questions, so that both he and his cardinals learnt by experience his prophetical powers. This was told me by Walter of Birbech, a monk in Hemmenrode, who was his intimate friend and used to tell many stories about him. Another time he saw a woman who was a sinner and exhorted her to confession, telling her to make it in his presence. She did this, and he did not suffer her to suppress anything in forgetfulness or shame, everywhere correcting her confession as was said above about the Roman clerk, just as if he had actually seen her sin.

Novice.—If you know anything more of this lay-brother, I should very much like to hear it, for it seems to me a more miraculous thing to know the hidden things of the heart, and to reveal man's secret thoughts than to raise the dead.

Monk.—What you say is indeed true, for to know a man's inward thoughts belong to God alone. When Dom Conrad, now the cardinal bishop of Porto, was a novice in Villers, it happened that Brother Simon and the monk Walter, now abbot of Villers, with several other monks and lay-brethren of our Order, were hearing mass in a certain secular

church. During the canon of this mass, Simon saw the spirit of Conrad, though his body was then far away, ſtanding near him and wearing a golden crown upon his head; he could read also the thoughts of his heart, and the prayers in which he was then engaged at Villers. After the mass, he drew Walter aside and said: "When you see Brother Conrad, the novice at Villers, tell him to be on his guard, for he will ſuffer certain temptations in the coming year; such and such were his meditations, and such and such his prayers during to-day's mass; and you may be sure that one day he will be a great personage in our Order." When later Walter saw the novice, he tried to find out in a indirect way the sort of meditations and prayers he was accuſtomed to use at mass; and when he replied: "Such and such are my usual prayers at mass"; the other went on: "Will you tell me what you were specially thinking of during mass laſt Sunday?" And when the novice asked why he enquired so earneſtly about his thoughts, he answered: "Only answer my queſtion and I will explain the reason afterwards"; and when the novice told him the order of his thoughts and prayers during that mass, Walter was overwhelmed with aſtonishment, for it all agreed even verbally with what brother Simon had told him. Then he made known to him what Simon had said about him, warning him at the same time about the nature of the predicted temptation, and urging him to be careful not to be deceived by the devil under the guise of an angel of light. Then a wonderful thing happened, for though the novice was well warned and well fortified beforehand, yet even so he could not escape the temptation that had been foretold, but was sorely harrassed by it within the year. How great he became afterwards is well known to us all, not only in the Order, but also in the whole church. Firſt he was made prior in Villers and then abbot; next he was elected to the Abbacy of Clairvaux, and then promoted to that of Citeaux. Nor could this position hold him long, but he was summoned by the lord pope Honorius[1] to be cardinal and bishop of Porto. What he may ſtill be in the future, we do not know. Once when Simon was ſtanding in the choir of

[1] Honorius III, 1216-1227.

Villers among his brethren, a lay-brother named Evirgeld, the blood brother of Ulrich of blessed memory, who was a monk in the same house, as he ſtood opposite him, began to be offended in him, and to say in his heart: "I do not believe that this lay-brother is all that people say of him; nor that his sayings come from the spirit of prophecy, but from mere conjecture"; and he began to despise him in his heart. When the service was over, Brother Simon took the monk Ulrich aside, and related to him in order all that his brother had been thinking in his heart, saying also: "Give your brother a warning that for the future he may not make such unwise judgments upon the grace of God in other men, leſt perchance he should one day rue them." When Evirgeld heard this he was greatly terrified, for he now learnt by his own experience what he had refused to believe on the teſtimony of others. Dom Walter, the abbot of Villers, whom I mentioned above, is my authority for all these things, for it was from his own lips that I heard them.

Novice.—These are marvellous things you tell me.

Monk.—It is scarce four years ago that Dom Simon, then prior and now abbot of Foigny, when visiting our house, brought with him this venerable lay-brother, though againſt his own wish, I believe; so long as he was with us, he refused to say who he was; but certain secret faults among us, that assuredly needed correction, were revealed to him by inspiration, and on his departure he pointed them out to one of our elders, who repeated to us what he had said, which we afterwards found to be perfectly true. From us he went on to Cologne, and as he was ſtanding in prayer in the convent of the Holy Mother of God, and liſtening to the ſiſters chanting the psalms, he groaned within himself and said: "Alas, that in all this college of nuns there is not, apart from the children, one who has charity," i.e. who is free from mortal sin. That he could know of this by the spirit of prophecy you will underſtand not only from what I have already said, but also from what follows. With the aforesaid Simon the prior, he went down to the Netherlands and together they came to the Lady Matilda of Schmithausen, a very upright and devoted matron, who had for a long time desired to see him, because she had

heard many things about him. Sitting down by her side, he revealed to her through the Spirit all her inmoſt thoughts, so that she marvelled much that so great grace should be found in any man. This I heard from the lips of the matron herself. Laſt year when Dom Englebert, archbishop of Cologne, had sent Dean Herman and his fellow-canon Gottschalk to the Roman Curia to seek dispensation from the vow of the cross, they found Brother Simon in a certain grange and enquired of him how their mission would result; and the event was a complete juſtification of his prophetic words: "Bishops' envoys," he said, "will gain but little in Curia, but a simple monk will carry through his business successfully." Both these sayings proved true, for they returned without success, but our monk whom we sent at the same time, obtained all he desired. There are many other great prophecies of this lay-brother which have not come to my full knowledge; some of them I have heard, but I have been unwilling to write them down, because I do not remember them very clearly; and I would far rather be silent even about what is true than write down what may be false.

Novice.—I wonder if a man so gifted and great had to endure any temptations.

Monk.—I have been told by an intimate friend of his, that a spirit of uncleanness use to vex him, and perhaps does ſtill, and yet it is said that he is ſtill virgin in body. From his boyhood he was brought up in Aulne, and kept the flocks of the monaſtery; then becoming a lay-brother he showed so much aptitude that he was made maſter of one of the granges; by the good and faithful adminiſtration of outward things, as a good and faithful ſteward, he won spiritual gifts.

Novice.—Would that all confessors had the spirit of this lay-brother, for then penitents could not hide their sins, either in shame or in forgetfulness.

Monk.—Although many confessors may lack the spirit of prophecy, yet there is in many a spirit of wisdom and prudence by which the defect is supplied.

Novice.—Tell me, I pray you, if it is of any use to confess sin, if the will to sin be not put away?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Showing that confession, if made with the intention of sinning again, is valueless.

Monk.—It is of little use, because God does not put away sin, unless a man first puts away his evil desire.

Novice.—Is it better to confess in such a way or remain altogether silent?

Monk.—It is better, i.e. more useful, to confess even with the intention of sinning again than to be silent.

Novice.—Why?

Monk.—Because the sinner in confession may be terrified and turned away by the penalty incurred by the sin, and he will be advised and instructed by his confessor; and it happens sometimes that he is taught both by word and example so that he comes back to his senses, and forsakes his evil intention; moreover, if the confessor be a righteous man and pray for his penitent, by virtue of his prayers God will sometimes give light to the sinner. Do you see how great advantage there is in confession?

Novice.—I both see it and rejoice over it, but I beg you to give me examples.

Monk.—That some have been terrified by their confessor and have given up the intention of sinning again, will be shown you by this example.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of a confessor who threw his money after one who had made his confession but refused to repent.

A man once came to an honest and outspoken priest, and confessed certain grievous sins; when he had been admonished

to give up these sins, and not only to give them up, but to be truly sorry for ever having indulged them, and to lead a better life in the future, he answered: "I can confess my sins, but I cannot pretend to give them up." Whereupon the priest refused to assign him any penance; and the man offered the usual fee and turned to go away. The priest took the money and presently hurled it after the retreating figure, crying: "Thy money perish with thee" (Acts viii. 20). The other was so startled both by the words and the act of his confessor, that he came back next day, repeated his confession, and accepted and carried out a severe penance. You see then of how great value is the wisdom of a confessor; if the heedless penitent had not been thus terrified, perchance he might never have been justified. Hear another example of the great help that wise advice may bring to penitents.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of an abbot of S. Panteleon in Cologne, who impoverished his brother by giving him money from the monastery funds.

In the monastery of S. Panteleon in Cologne there was an abbot whose blood-brother was a citizen of that town. He was very fond of this brother and used often to give him secret presents from money belonging to the monastery. When he put this money with his own and traded with it, no matter what the venture was, it always resulted in a loss, and still he did not discover that the monastery money was eating up his own as fire consumes straw. Now he was a very expert trader, and more gifted with foresight and caution than his fellows, so that their prosperity and his losses were beyond all understanding. The abbot was full of compassion for his misfortunes, and kept giving him more money, which still

proved useless, for his means grew less and less, until at last he was reduced to great straits. Then the abbot said to him: "What is the matter with you, brother? How is it that you distress us both by throwing away your substance for nothing?" and he replied: "I live very sparingly, I look after my business very diligently, and I cannot understand what it is that is working against me." At length he came to his right mind, went to his priest and told him the whole story in confession; and the priest said to him: "If you will follow my advice, you will soon be rich; this money of your brother's is a theft, and is the devourer of all your substance. In future take nothing from him, but trade with the little of your own that is still left, and you will see *the good hand of your God upon you* (Ezra vii. 9). And of all the gain that you shall make, return the half to your brother, and use the rest for your own needs, and continue this until you have restored all the monastery money that you have had." Wonderful illustration of the mercy of God! The man followed his confessor's advice, and soon grew so rich, that he restored all the money to his brother and himself flourished abundantly; and when the abbot asked: "How have you gained all this wealth, my brother?" he replied: "So long as I was taking what belonged to your brethren, I was poor and miserable, and you were in grievous sin; you in giving me what was not yours to give, and I for taking what belonged to others. Ever since I repented of this, and avoided the stolen money, I have abounded under the blessing of the Lord." See the value of wise advice in confession. I will tell you a further example, given to me by Herman, the dean of Bonn, who said that he had heard it from the priest to whom it had happened.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of two merchants of Cologne, who in confession were advised to keep their word scrupulously, and so increased their riches.

Two citizens of Cologne confessed among other things two kinds of sins, which are indeed very grievous in themselves, though they seem light and almost negligible on account of their general use, especially among merchants, I mean falsehood and perjury. "Sir," they said, "we can scarcely buy or sell anything without being compelled to lie and swear, and often even to swear falsely." When the vicar said to them: "These are very grievous sins, they were prohibited by the Saviour Himself when He said: *Let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay* (Matt. v. 7)"; they replied: "It is impossible for us to keep this injunction in business." Then said the priest: "Follow my advice, and it will be easily possible for you. Do not lie, do not swear; recommend your bargains only at the lowest price you are willing to take"; and they promised that they would make trial of this for a year; for this is what he begged of them. By the intervention of Satan, who always opposes himself to the way of salvation, they scarcely sold anything during all that year. When it was over they came back to the vicar and said: "Our obedience of this year has been very ruinous to us, our customers have fallen off, and without our oaths we cannot sell anything." Then the priest answered: "Have no fear, this year has been a trial of your faith; keep it steadfastly purposed in your heart, that no adversity, no poverty shall draw you aside from your resolution, and God will assuredly bless you. Then, moved by God's spirit, they promised that they would take his advice and obey the Divine command all the days of their life, even if they had to come to beggary. Wonderful result! Forthwith the Lord put an end to the trial that had been laid upon them; men began to throng their places of business more than any of the others, and in a short time they became so rich as to astonish themselves. They came back

to their confessor, and thanked him that through his good advice they had not only been delivered from grievous sins, but further had even been increased in wealth.

Novice.—Examples like this ought to be set before merchants in the churches; perhaps they would learn to shrink from trafficking for ill-gotten gains, and from swearing and lying.

Monk.—That is well said.

Novice.—May I now hear how sinners have been justified through the merits of their confessors?

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of an ill-tempered woman, who by her confession to S. Malachi, gained a spirit of gentleness.

Monk.—In his life of S. Malachi, a bishop in Ireland in our own times, the blessed Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, writes of a woman who was so shrewish that neither neighbours nor relations nor even her own sons could endure her violent outbursts of temper. They took her to S. Malachi, and complained of her, beseeching him to have pity upon her. The saint exhorted the unhappy creature to make her confession, and she obeyed; he assigned her a penance and prayed to God to give patience to the impatient. And lo! a change came over her from the hand of the Most High. From that hour, by the merits of her confessor, the Lord gave her so great patience and serenity, that she who before had been wont to exasperate everyone, could not thenceforth be moved either by loss or by insult. Also that some have been brought to contrition in confession by the mercy of God alone has already been made clear in the second chapter of the second book, which tells of the apostate monk who chose for himself two thousand years in purgatory.

Novice.—Even because the fruits of confession are so manifold, it seems to me right, that those whose duty it is to cleanse others should themselves be holy and clean.

Monk.—Listen.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

What a confessor ought to be.

That a confessor may be perfect, he should be full of the fear of God, wise and learned, outspoken, yet pitiful, kindly, and always ready to hear penitents gladly. How much good may result if he have these qualities, and how much evil if he lack them, let the following examples teach.

CHAPTER XL.

Of an avaricious confessor who assigned the same penance to two men who came to confess to him, one for incontinence and the other for continence.

Near Soest, a city in the diocese of Cologne, a priest, by name Eginhardt, was in charge of a parish; a learned man, but with no fear of God before his eyes. At the close of Lent one of his parishioners came to him and confessed that he had not kept apart from his wife during the sacred season. The priest upbraided him severely, telling him that this holy time was set apart for the very purpose of exercising prayer, fasting, continence and other good works, and added: "For the satisfaction of this sin, I bid you bring me eighteen denarii

that I may say eighteen masses for the expiation of your guilt"; and this the penitent promised to do. As he went away, another parishioner came to confess, and when questioned, stated that he had been continent all through Lent; whereupon the priest said: "You have done very wrong in keeping away from your wife for so long; she might have conceived a child, and your continence has made that impossible." The man was terrified, as is the way with simple folk, and asked what he must do to atone for his fault, and the confessor replied: "You must bring me eighteen denarii, and I will appease God on your behalf with as many masses"; and the other promised that on a certain day he would bring the money. A few days later it happened in the providence of God that these two men were going at the same time to the market, each with a sack of produce, and one of their sacks fell from the horse into the mud at a bend of the road. When the other ran up to help his comrade, the latter cried out angrily: "May the devil pay out our priest, for it is he that is the cause of all my trouble." His companion asked what he meant, and he answered: "I confessed to him that I had been incontinent, and he laid on me a penance, which compels me to sell my crop before it is ready, and to take him the money he demanded." To which the other replied: "What is this I hear? I confessed the exact opposite, and yet am punished with exactly the same penalty; it is on this very errand that I am now on my way to the market; assuredly our priest must be a rascal." When they reached the city they made a complain about him to the dean and canon of S. Patroclus, and brought great shame upon him. You see how, if there had been any fear of God in this priest, he could not have been guilty of such awful presumption in turning confessions to the profit of his avarice. He was very different to the priest spoken of in the thirty-fifth chapter, who threw his money after the unrepentant sinner.

Novice.—I think that avarice in a priest must be a very hateful thing in the sight of God.

CHAPTER XLI.

Of the avarice and wantonness of priests.

About this you shall hear not my judgment, but that of God Himself, as He spake by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah: *I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely.* Also by Ezekiel: *Ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to keep alive the souls that should not live.*

Novice.—I have heard of confessors who for a fowl and a pint of wine will either relax or cancel altogether the penance due for a whole tale of sins.

Monk.—That is why it is said of them by Hosea: *They eat up the sins of my people.* And be sure of this, that the Lord reproves not only the sin of avarice in His priests, but also the sin of wantonness, when He says by the prophet: *The inhabitants of Samaria have worshipped the calves of Bethaven.* Samaria signifies guard-house, the inhabitants of Samaria are the priests, whose duty it is always to remain on guard over themselves and over those committed to their keeping. They worship the calves of Bethaven when they live wanton lives—their house is a house of iniquity, for this is the meaning of Bethaven. The calves, which are wanton creatures signify the wantonness of the priests, or perhaps their concubines, which alas! in these days many of them keep and fear not. How great evils can be wrought in confession by evil priests, who have no fear of God, I could show you by many examples, but I must spare the Order, spare the sex and spare religion. One however I will tell you; it happened long ago and was related to me by a priest.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of a matron who had brought up a ward and carried him forward to the priesthood, and when she made her confession to him, he betrayed her.

There was a rich and honourable matron, who once had committed certain sins so dishonourable that for modesty she could not confess them to any priest. One day she found a destitute infant, took him up, carried him home and brought him up as her own son, caused him to be well educated, and finally ordained as a priest. Then at length, trusting to the love she had always shown him, she confessed to him the sins that had so long lain hid. When that graceless fool heard them, forgetful of God, forgetful of all the kindness that had been lavished upon him, taking confidence from the fact, that if she should refuse what he asked, he could threaten to expose her sins to the world, he began to make wicked proposals to her. She, now at peace with God through her confession, shrank with horror from his words; whereupon he began to spread evil reports about her, but she, now that she had cleansed herself by confessing her sins, had no fear that she would be subjected to the brand of perpetual infamy among men; and her confidence was justified; for the virtue of confession delivered her from evil report, while he was banished from the province.

Novice.—These two examples of wicked confessors are surely enough; will you tell me some of those who fear God?

CHAPTER XLIII.

Of a matron who tempted her confessor.

Monk.—When a certain noble matron was talking to an abbot of our Order about the secrets of her conscience, under

the form of confession, she said that she was deeply in love with him. He, as a just and God-fearing priest, made the sign of the cross upon his breast, and with difficulty repelled her approaches with such words as he could find, saying that he was a monk, an old man, slovenly and uncouth. And as he said to a monk who told me the story, this woman was so great and powerful a lady "that if I had been in the world," he said, "as once I was, never would I have dared to speak to her of such a thing, not even in the faintest hint. Do you see how the devil tries to deceive even us who are already dead to the world?" For this abbot before his conversion had been a knight, strenuous in arms, comely and well-known. If you wish to know, he was Dom Charles, the abbot of Villers.

Novice.—Would that all confessors feared God, as this man did!

Monk.—It is not only the fear of God that is needful for them to restrain them from sin, but also wisdom, so that they may discriminate between sin and sin; so that they may use the key of knowledge as well as that of power, and may know how to distinguish between eczema and leprosy, i.e. between venial and mortal sin; also between leprosy and leprosy; i.e. between mortal and criminal sin; because sins vary in heinousness, whether they be venial or mortal, and penance should be adjusted according to their degree, and distinction should be made between eczema and leprosy.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Of an indiscreet priest, who used to assign to his penitents the penances of the last year.

In our province there is a priest vicar who used to say to those who came to make their confessions in Lent: I assign you the same penance as was assigned to you by my predecessor; and to others he would say: "Carry out the same

penance as I appointed for you last year ; " without considering how they might have sinned afterwards, nor what satisfaction they had given for their past sins. This was told me by one of his parishioners.

CHAPTER XLV.

Also of a vicar, who, when several wished to confess, would make them repeat a general confession after him and then would assign the same penance to all.

Another vicar, as I heard from his successor, used to have this practice, that when in Lent his parishioners came to the church to make their confession, he would take six or eight at a time to the altar, and placing his stole round their necks, would dictate to them a general confession in German, making them say it after him, word by word ; then after assigning to all of them the same penance, would send them away together. He did the same to all, without considering what they had done, or who had sinned more, or who less. When he died, one of his parishioners, an old man who had done well in his business, sent for his successor, asking him to bring the Holy Communion, because he was sick to death. When the priest came and said : " You must first make your confession," he replied : " You make it for me ", for he only knew the custom quoted above. And when the priest insisted, he was much disturbed and said : " Certainly, Sir, your predecessor never spoke to me like that." But the priest still refused to give him communion, and at last he broke out : " I confess that I have sinned in adulteries, thefts, robberies by violence, murders, perjuries and many other crimes." Then said the priest : " Have you really done all these things? " and the sick man answered : " Truly,

Sir, I have not done one of them." But he had always been accuſtomed to make his confession in this way, and nothing would induce him to confess his actual and particular sins. You see what ſtrange kinds of confessors there are, what teachers, what guides of men's souls! Whence can come such negligence, such ſtupid decisions except from ignorance of the Divine law? But I should like to show you how greatly a penitent may profit by the wisdom of a well trained confessor.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Of a woman who was juſtifying herself in confession, and how a wise prieſt showed her that she had many mortal sins.

When Herman, Dean of Bonn, was vicar of S. Martin in Cologne, a woman came to him in Lent to confess her sins. Kneeling before him, she began to pour forth all the good deeds she could remember ever having done, and to juſtify herself with the Pharisee in the gospel, saying: "Sir, every Friday all through the year I faſt on bread and water, give alms and go to church," and many other things of the same kind. When she had finished, the vicar said: "Why have you come to me, Madam? Do you wish me to give you a penance for these good deeds? Why do you not tell me your sins?" And when she replied: "I am not conscious of any sins," he asked what her trade was, and the woman answered that she was a seller of old iron. So he asked: "Do you ever put smaller pieces of iron into your bundles of larger ſtuff, so that you may sell them all together in that way?" When she admitted that she did, he replied: "There is one mortal sin, for that is deceit. Do you ever tell lies or swear

or perjure yourself, or speak ill of your rivals, or envy those who sell more than you?" When she replied; "Yes, often," the vicar said: "These too are mortal sins, and unless you accept and carry out a severe penance, you will quickly go to hell." At these words the woman was frightened, realised that she had sinned and learnt how she ought to confess for the future. Well did he, as a wise and learned man, know how *to dig through the wall* (Ezek. viii. 8) and drag to light the *idols portrayed* (Ezek. viii. 10) upon the woman's heart.

Novice.—What do you mean by digging through the wall?

Monk.—Questioning the penitent about his sins and their circumstances. The phrase is Ezekiel's, and is fully and excellently expounded by S. Gregory. The confessor ought to be careful not to dig through the wall, that is, the conscience of the penitent, by any injudicious questions that might teach him to sin.

CHAPTER XLVII.

How a confessor ought not to make enquiries about unknown sins, and an example of a maiden who was troubled by this.

In the district of Brabant there was a religiously minded girl who made her confession to a certain priest. He, being not very wise, began to dig rashly into her conscience, i.e. to ask her about certain sins unknown to her, which she had never either committed or even heard of. But immediately she began to be tempted by these very sins, and was troubled so much that she said to the priest: "You have done me an ill turn this day by speaking of these things to me."

And as she afterwards confessed to another priest, it was not without the greatest difficulty that she restrained herself from these particular sins. The wall is to be dug through in such a way that the house may not be injured, the idols are to be searched out from beneath their coverings with skill and care that the tent may not be overturned. But yet the confessor must be keenly anxious about the sins of his flock, and must urge them to confession both by word and example.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Of an abbot, who by his example brought another abbot to confession.

An abbot of our Order who wished to search the conscience of another abbot, his pupil, as I have heard him say, made to him a general confession of his sins. Then he said: "My Lord Abbot, if you in turn wish to say anything, I will gladly listen." The other, being ashamed, then confessed to his own sins, though he had not meant to do so, but was incited to it by his brother's example rather than by his words, for he was under no obligation to confess to him.

Novice.—As far as I can see, wisdom is very necessary for confessors.

Monk.—You will understand this still better by the following example. What I am about to say was told me by a venerable priest and Prior of the Premonstratensian Order.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Also of an abbot, who of set purpose ate flesh with his monks in a hiding place, and incited them to confession by his example.

A certain Benedictine abbot, a good man of strict life, had a house of monks who were remarkably lax. One day a number of them had prepared for themselves a feast of divers kinds of flesh and costly wines; and as they did not dare to consume these in any part of the buildings, through fear of their abbot, they used as their banqueting hall a huge empty wine vat, called by the vulgar a tun, and thither they carried all their good things. It was told the abbot that certain monks were holding a revel in this tun; and he went immediately to the place in great grief of heart, and looking in, changed all the mirth of the feasters into gloom. When he saw them thus cast down, he pretended jocularity and cried: "Eh! Brothers, can you have the heart thus to eat and drink without me? That is not my idea of fair play; I am coming to take my share"; and he went in, washed his hands, and ate and drank with them, taking away their fears by his example. Next day, having spoken with the Prior beforehand, and told him what to do, as soon as the monks were all collected in the Chapterhouse, the abbot rose up, and standing before the Prior, besought forgiveness with much humility, and pretending to tremble with fear, spoke as follows: "I confess to you, my lord Prior, and to all my Brethren, that I have been overcome by the sin of gluttony, and that I sinned yesterday in a hidden place and ate flesh furtively in a wine-vat against the order and Rule of our Father, S. Benedict." He then sat down, and began to bare his back for the discipline; and when the Prior tried to prevent him from doing this, he said: "Do not hinder my scourging; it is far better for me to pay the penalty now than hereafter." When he had received the rod, and also a penance, and had returned to his seat, the monks concerned, fearing to be denounced by him if they

remained silent, rose up of their own accord, and confessed the same excess. The abbot ordered a good and strong discipline to be laid upon them by a monk appointed for the purpose, upbraided them severely, and bid them never to presume in such a way for the future under pain of very severe punishment. Thus the wise physician corrected by example those whom he could not reform by teaching.

Novice.—I like this story.

Monk.—Hear now an example showing how a confessor's wisdom ought to be tempered with discretion.

CHAPTER L.

Of a penitent who gradually climbed from a moderate penance to a greater.

A certain grievous sinner was unwilling to undertake any penance corresponding to his sins, and his confessor, who was both wise and discreet, asked him: "Can you say each day at least one Lord's Prayer on behalf of these great sins?" When he replied that he could, he laid that penance upon him. Wonderful is the mercy of God, for this prayer began at once to soften the man's heart, so that he came back to ask for a further penance, and continued to do this until he had reached a worthy penance. It belongs to the discretion of a confessor to assign proportionate penances for great sins and for small; and because every penance is to be chosen according to the condition of the penitent, he has the power of moderating both the quality and quantity of it. But always let him remember that *mercy rejoiceth against judgement* (James ii. 13), whether the confession be private or public, so that he himself may obtain the same mercy from God.

CHAPTER LI.

Of the Abbot Gisilbert, who spared those who lost their temper in the Chapter, and so incited them to give ample satisfaction.

Dom Gisilbert, the abbot of Hemmenrode was so pitiful that if ever one of his monks or lay-brothers had forgotten the virtue of patience and lost his temper after being rated by the Chapter in the presence of all, he would have compassion on his infirmity and say: "Good Brother, go and sit down now; tomorrow you will admit this fault." The monk, being thus given time for reflection, regained his tranquillity of mind, and came back the next day ashamed of his violence, admitted his fault, and very patiently undertook a severe penance. How much help may be given to penitents by the kindliness of a confessor will be shown in the following example.

CHAPTER LII.

Of a vicar who by his kindly words in confession brought both a usurer and a murderer to give satisfaction.

The aforesaid Dean of Bonn was sitting in Lent in the Church of S. Martin, where he was vicar, hearing the confession of a woman, when he saw two of his parishioners talking as they sat together in a window some distance away. One of them was a usurer and the other a man well known to be a homicide. When the woman went away and this usurer took her place to make his confession, the vicar said to him: "My friend, you and I together to-day will defeat the devil finely. Only do you confess your sins without reserve, put away all intention of sinning again and follow my advice, and I promise you eternal life; and I will so

moderate your penance that it shall not be too difficult for you" ; for he knew well the sin by which he was beset. He replied : " If I could really be sure of what you promise, gladly would I follow your advice" ; and the confessor renewed his promise. Now when he had made his confession, forsworn his usury, and undertaken his penance, he went to his companion, the homicide already spoken of, and said : " Truly we have the kindeſt of prieſts, for he has brought me to repentance by the gentleness of his words." The other, urged by his example, came to confession, and perceiving the same atmosphere of compassion around him, accepted his penance and carried it through.

Novice.—From the many things you have already said, I gather that confession requires a high degree of perfection both in penitent and confessor.

Monk.—One thing ſtill remains to be said, and it is the crown of all a confessor's virtues, namely that he should show himself always ready and willing to liſten gladly to any that may wish to confess. Of this you have had an example in the sixth chapter of the firſt book, where the Prior of Aulne had signed to a monk, who wished to make his confession, that he muſt wait, and the angel of the Lord, in the guise of that same monk, rebuked him. How much it is pleasing to God, and how much it helps sinners, when the confessor is always ready for this duty, will be shown in the following ſtory.

CHAPTER LIII.

Of a monk of Clairvaux who, helped by the prayers of his brethren, opened his heart to the Prior.

Two years ago when Dom William, the Abbot of Clairvaux, had gone to Rome with other abbots to oppose Cardinal

Galo, one of his monks confessed to one of the priests a certain criminal sin. The confessor said to him: "I have listened to you willingly, and gladly will I advise you, but I cannot give you absolution, because this confession is not made to the right person; I advise and beg you to confess to the Prior, who, in the absence of the abbot, is able to absolve you." When the other replied that he would never do this, the confessor in his grief and perplexity revealed the danger of the penitent to Dom Siger the Prior, without mentioning the person or the sin. He, much disturbed, and pondering deeply how he might deliver his brother from his peril, invoked with tears the angel of good counsel. At the same time a certain lay-brother deserted from the monastery, carrying off much stolen property; and the Prior, by the inspiration of God, seized the occasion, and after dwelling upon the heinousness of the sin of theft in the full chapter of monks, added this: "If perchance there be any among you whose conscience is seared so that he cannot open it to his superior, I bid you all pray for him for the next three days." They all consented; and while a young priest was weeping and praying on the vigil of All Saints, he heard a voice from heaven, saying: "As to the monk for whom you are praying, his confession has been useless, because it has not been made to the right person; but tell the Prior that to-morrow when Prime has been said, he is to stand after mass at the door of the Chapterhouse; and the man himself will come to him." And thus it happened; while the Prior was standing before the Chapterhouse, behold! the monk came, made to him the sign of wishing to confess, went in with him, made his confession with much groaning and weeping, and accepted the due penance.

BOOK IV

OF TEMPTATION

CHAPTER I.

Of what temptation consists in the Religious life; and an example from King Charlemagne, and of a thief delivered from the gallows by S. Bernard.

When the children of Israel came up out of Egypt, they were straightway tempted in the desert. Egypt signifies the world or sin, and the desert the monastery; for in respect of numbers it is deserted by the many and inhabited only by the few. Egypt is interpreted as darkness or tribulation or perplexity or persecution; and nowhere will you find greater darkness or tribulation or perplexity or persecution than in sin and in the world. The children of Israel are the elect, and as soon as they have come up out of the world by conversion, and up out of sin by contrition and confession, can scarcely avoid, especially at first, all manner of temptation in the desert, that is, the monastery. And it seems fitting that temptation should be treated in the fourth book, because four is the number of stability: for a body which is foursquare stands naturally in whatsoever direction it is turned. When the sinner has been converted to the Lord in body by forsaking the world, and in heart by contrition for his sins, and is justified and strengthened by oral confession, then he will go forward with more security to the battle of temptation, and will fight with the enemy more effectively. Wherefore it was after baptism, not before it, that the Saviour permitted Himself to be tempted by the

devil. Oral confession in contrition of heart is a second baptism. Hence it is that the Apostles were exposed to persecutions after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and that is why soon after Pentecost the books of the Kings are read, which commemorate the wars of the faithful people against the heathen, that is, of the virtues against the vices.

Novice.—The order of justification seems the right one, that as confession follows contrition, so ought satisfaction to follow confession.

Monk.—You are right indeed in this, but you do not realise the full meaning of temptation. [That, among the Religious and especially in the monastic Orders, temptation is penance or satisfaction for sin, I will easily show you from the words of one full of experience, I mean the holy Job (Job vii. 1. R.V. margin). The life of man upon earth is both a military service and a temptation ; military service by reason of its discipline, temptation by reason of its toil and peril. And note that he does not say: The life of an animal is temptation, but of a man, that is of one who lives rationally and worthily of a man, such as is the life of the religious. But the worldly and the carnal, who walk according to the flesh, are not properly said to be tempted, because, as soon as they feel the temptation, they either consent to it, or resist half-heartedly. If then the life of the religious is temptation, since they are always fighting against vices and lusts, by watching, by fasting, by prayer, by obedience in prosperity and adversity, by having no possessions in this world for the sake of Christ, needs be that you allow that this temptation itself is a satisfaction for their sins. Upon those who join our Order, even though they may have committed many and grievous sins, no other satisfaction is laid beyond keeping the Rule.] This is why S. Bernard, when once he received a certain king of France into the Order, laid upon him that he should only, after making his confession, say the Lord's Prayer. And when he was troubled, thinking that he was being mocked by the saint, the blessed abbot replied: "Only do you say this Prayer and protect the Order, and I will answer for your sins in the Day of Judgment." Again when the same

saint was passing by chance where a guilty man was to be hanged, and asked that he might be handed over to him, and the judge said: "Sir, the man is a thief and worthy of the gallows," the abbot answered: "Give him to me and I will hang him," speaking of the severity of the Order as a gibbet. The Apostolic See granted this privilege to the Order, that the observance of its rule should be sufficient satisfaction for any sinner.

Novice.—If our religion is satisfaction for our sins, and that satisfaction is temptation from without, will you tell me in what and by whom we are tempted?

Monk.—The ways in which we are tempted are countless, but the agents by whom we are tempted are four: God, the flesh, the world and the devil (Gen. xxii. 1; Deut. xiii. 3; Jam. i. 13. Vulg.). The three other tempters (than God) are enemies, and as enemies are to be guarded against. By yielding to them we are confounded, by resisting them we do well, by conquering them we are crowned. How great toil there is in temptation, how great fear, how great cost, how great deserving, the following examples will declare.

CHAPTER II.

Of the seven deadly sins.

There are seven principal sins, which spring from the same poisonous root, namely pride; from these seven nearly every temptation is derived. The first vice that is born from pride is vain glory, the second anger, the third envy, the fourth accidie or depression, the fifth avarice, the sixth gluttony or gormandise, the seventh luxury. Of these some are of the soul, as vainglory, anger, envy: others of the body, as gluttony and luxury; and some belong to both, as accidie and avarice. Accidie, so far as it consists of depression of spirit, is of the soul, and of the body in the external torpor that it produces. These seven plagues are the seven rivers,

with which is watered the land of Egypt, i.e. the darkened heart of the sinner. And as the Nile, from whose abundance the seven rivers are fed, flows forth from Paradise and is distributed through Egypt, so Lucifer was cast forth from heaven for pride and diffuses himself through man's heart darkened by mortal sin. These seven vices are typified by the seven unclean races, whom the Lord destroyed from the promised land before the face of Israel ; they are also signified by the seven devils, which the Saviour cast out from the heart of Mary Magdaline. Taking four of these seven for wheels, the prophet Joel constructed a chariot for Pharaoh, saying: *That which the palmerworm hath left the locust hath eaten ; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten ; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten* (Joel i. 4). The palmerworm the blessed Gregory interprets as lust, the locust as pride, the cankerworm as gluttony and the caterpillar as anger. Many overcome lust and are lifted up into pride ; from pride they fall into gluttony ; from excess of eating and drinking they are turned to wrath. Three horses draw this chariot, and they are the three remaining vices, to wit, envy, accidie and avarice. Here then are three vices in the horses and four in the wheels, and by the seven the devil is carried, according to the prophet Amos (Amos 1 and 2), against Damascus, against Gaza, against Tyre, against Edom, against Ammon, against Moab, and even against Israel and Judah.

Novice.—When we are tempted by the vices, is it from within or without?

Monk.—After the entrance of the virtues, the vices are no longer within us in any settled or active condition, but rather as inflammable and dangerous tinder. Just as, after the entrance of the children of Israel, those seven tribes were not altogether destroyed, but made tributary, so when the virtues enter into the land of our heart, the vices are not entirely rooted out, but are held in subjection ; and as afterwards the children of Israel were often attacked by the remnants of those races, so by the tinder of the vices our virtues are often tempted and exercised.

Novice.—I beg you to explain to me the strength of these

seven vices, and to give me examples of the severity with which they tempt us.

CHAPTER III.

Of pride and her daughters.

Monk.—Pride, which holds the first place among the vices, is a desire for exclusive pre-eminence among others. Hence comes it's name of *Superbia,* as that which raises itself *above the brim,* i.e. beyond measure. Some include vainglory in this vice, the two thus making one in the first vice of the seven. For there are two kinds of pride, one inward in the elation of the heart, and the other outward in the ostentation of action; the first properly called pride, and the other boastfulness or vainglory. The offshoots and flowers of pride are disobedience, fickleness, hypocrisy, strife, obstinancy, discord, presumption in innovations. The following examples will show with what power, through the vice of pride, the world the flesh and the devil tempt not only those who are still in the world but even the cloistered.

CHAPTER IV.

Of a lay-brother tempted by the spirit of pride, and set free by an angel, who showed him the bodies of the dead.

There was a lay-brother in Hemmenrode, a native of Cologne, named Liffard, a very humble and gentle person, whose office it was to keep the swine of the monastery. Towards the close of his life, as was told me by Dom Herman, who was then his abbot, he was tempted by the spirit of

pride in the following manner. He was now an old man, and had fed swine for many years, and he began in his heart to dwell upon such thoughts as this: "What is it that I am doing? I am a man of good birth, and yet I am looked down upon by all my friends because of this menial office. No longer will I bring confusion upon them by remaining a swineherd in this place; since no one shows me any consideration, here I will ſtay no longer. Now he had already made up his mind to leave the monaſtery the very next morning, being unable any longer to reſiſt the temptation, but on that same night, while he was sitting up wakeful in his bed, there appeared to him a certain reverend personage, who beckoned to him with his hand that he should follow him. Immediately he arose, put on his sandals, and, following the other, who led the way, came to the door of the dormitory. This was opened by a hand from heaven, and together they came to the door of the church, which, as he looked was opened by the same agency and they entered together. So authoritative were the signs of his guide, that he could not but follow wherever he led. Then he was taken through the midſt of the choir of the lay-brothers, and as he passed before the altar of S. John Baptiſt, he made a deep obeisance as he was accuſtomed; the other also bowed his head saying: "You have done well in making so deep an obeisance."

When they came to the S. Door of the church, which leads into the cloiſter, they saw this door, which also leads to the cemetery, opened in similar fashion, though all these doors are closed and locked at night. When brother Liffard saw this, he marvelled greatly, yet he dared not say to that other: "Who art thou? and whither doſt thou lead me?" When they entered the cemetery, lo, all the graves ſtood open; and he led the lay brother to the grave of one who had been recently buried, and said to him: "Look at this man; very soon you will be even as he; whither then do you to propose to flee?" Then he turned to lead him to other corpses now already putrid and revolting, but the lay-brother began to reſiſt and to cry: "Spare me, Sir, spare me, for indeed I cannot look upon them." His guide answered: "If you cannot

bear to look upon that which soon you yourself will be, why, for a little pride, do you wish to withdraw from your haven of safety? If then you desire me to spare you further sights, you must promise me that you will not leave this place"; and he promised him.

Now as he took him back, immediately the graves were closed, and closed also was each door after they had passed through. When they came to the altar of the lay-brothers, and he made his reverence there, the other straightway commended him for this, showing plainly that the deep obeisance was pleasing to God. And so they came to the dormitory, and at once the door was shut behind them, and when the lay-brother again sat down upon his bed, his guide vanished; and from that hour the temptation passed.

Novice.—Surely that personage who, by a vision so abhorrent, opened the eyes of the lay-brother thus obsessed with pride, and brought him back to a humble mind, must have been the very angel of the Lord?

Monk.—You have judged rightly, for so great is the loving kindness of the Redeemer, that although He sometimes permit His servants to be hard pressed by grievous temptations, yet He will not suffer them, by yielding, to lose all the fruit of their labours.

Novice.—Alas, I fear that vainglory often impedes the merits of the Religious.

Monk.—Vainglory battens upon the virtues, and in sanctity finds its most fertile soil.

CHAPTER V.

How a demon said that he had no fear of a virgin monk, because of his pride.

A demoniac was once brought by his friends to a monastery of our Order in the hope of his deliverance. The Prior

came out, bringing with him a young monk of saintly reputation, whom he knew to be virgin in body, and said to the demon: "If this monk should order you to go out, how would you dare to remain?" The demon replied: "I have no fear of him, because of his pride."

Novice.—From this I clearly understand that the vice of vainglory was produced in the heart of this monk by the virtue of bodily innocence.

Monk.—God has no pleasure in, the devil has no fear of, virginity without humility; but humility even without virginity is both pleasing to God and a terror to Satan. Here is an example.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the novice Theobald, who conquered his pride by drinking dirty water.

We had once a monk named Theobald, who before his conversion had been reckless and wild, given over to wine and dice, and notorious throughout Cologne for his buffooneries; often did I myself see him walking along the streets of that city stark naked. At last he became ashamed and remorseful for his scandalous way of life, and by the intercession of the leading churchmen of Cologne he was received by Dom Gevard our abbot, and became a novice in our house. While on probation, thinking that nothing could be more acceptable to God than works of humility, he besought that he might be allowed to wash the linen of the foulest kind, and obtained his request.

Now when he had done this for several days, the tempter came to him, and piercing him with an arrow of pride, put into his heart thoughts of this kind: "Fool, what are you doing? what business is it of yours to wash the dirty clothes of those who are probably less well born than yourself?"

After harbouring such thoughts for a while, he realised that they came from the devil, who is king over all the sons of pride ; so, on that day, he washed the linen with more care than usual, and, that he might the more fully discomfit the devil, and deſtroy the pride he had put into his heart, drank the dirty water.

Then the devil, angry to find he could not overthrow him by the spirit of pride, attacked him with terrors. (All this was told me by Dom Henry our abbot, who said that he had heard it from his own lips under the form of confeſſion.) For from that filthy and malodorous draught, he was tormented with such violent inward pains, that it seemed to him as if his bowels were burſting. Further, that night when he retired, he saw two men hanging from a beam in the private room ; their bodies were black, their clothes torn, their faces covered, so that they appeared like criminals who had suffered on the gallows ; and when the novice came upon them thus unexpectedly, he was terribly frightened, and almoſt driven out of his senses ; he ran back to the dormitory and sat down panting by the bed of Brother Henry, who was afterwards our chief cellarer. And as this same Henry told me, he trembled so violently, his breaſt was shaken with such frequent sobs, that he marvelled what could be the matter with him, of what he could have seen. When he told him to go to bed, for it was a bitterly cold night and he was sitting only in his tunic, he refused. Thereupon Henry threw over his shoulders a part of his own covering, and so left him to sit until the signal for matins.

Novice.—I marvel that a new wall so violently shaken should continue to ſtand.

Monk.—He did not ſtand for long, for, shaken by frequent batterings of temptation, he was at laſt deceived and caſt down by an outward appearance of good. When he became a monk, he gained permission from the abbot, after much entreaty, to go to France to visit his relations, whom he had not seen for twenty years before his conversion, nor had cared to see them, and he was to ſtay there for a year in a certain house of our Order. He went and returned, and then deserted, and died outside the Order. A vagrant clerk,

who was present at his death, told us that he had made his confession to a secular priest, and had been anointed and communicated by him ; and so died in a good contrition.

Novice.—I learn here from the importunate temptations of the demons, that they were more afraid of the humility of this novice than of the virginity of the monk in the former story.

Monk.—How hateful true humility is to their pride, you will learn more fully from the next chapter. What I am going to tell you I heard as one of the acts of S. Bernard, and I have thought it well to commit it to writing, because I have never seen it written elsewhere.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the abbot S. Bernard, who was jeered at by the spirit of pride, when greasing his shoes.

One day, as an exercise in humility, the abbot S. Bernard ordered the smith to give him grease, and to light a fire in the furnace. Then he shut himself in, that he might not seem to be seeking praise for his menial work, and set himself to grease his shoes. The spirit of pride, hating such humility, came into the room, where it was being practised, and, under the guise of an honourable guest, asked in a loud voice where the abbot was ; and when the saint looked up at him the demon cried : "Heavens ! what an abbot ! Assuredly it would much better become his honour to entertain his guests than to occupy himself in greasing shoes to the confusion of his brethren." At once the saint, taught by the Holy Spirit that this was a spirit unclean, bent down his eyes again to his humble task, and that boastful spirit was resolved into air and disappeared.

Novice.—If holy men are afraid of being elated by occupying themselves in despised tasks, or, what is a smaller thing,

by being observed in doing them, much more ought we to guard against vainglory when we are practising duties that are both holy and honourable.

Monk.—What do you mean by "duties both holy and honourable?"

Novice.—Praying, singing, preaching and the like.

Monk.—We who are not yet holy, must, as you say, watch earnestly against vainglory, because when we pray the very grace of tears and of heart devotion frequently uplifts us even against our will; and when we sing or chant, the sweetness or sonorousness of the voice frequently ensnares us; and in our preaching we are often tempted and inflated by the learning, eloquence or loftiness of our discourse. Others, and this can only be reckoned to stupidity, when they have no grace for prayer, or voice for song, or learning or eloquence for preaching, pride themeselves even on their monk's dress. This too is a sign of still greater madness, that some pray, sing, or preach with the simple aim of winning from these exercises human praise and temporal advantage. Of such the Saviour saith: *Verily I say unto you, they have their reward,* i.e. what they have sought, to wit, the praise of men and worldly profit. In these sacred exercises there are some whom pride only besets because they have something to be proud of; others whom it distresses because they find pleasure in their good performance of them; but the great majority are hypocrites, who by their own consent and desire, are wholly conquered and strongly oppressed by the sin of vainglory. Would you like now to hear some examples of this?

Novice.—Yes, indeed.

Monk.—You have an example of vainglory in prayer in the twenty-second chapter of the second book, where the devil marked the monk's tears, when his heart was uplifted by that very grace. How much danger there is in pleasure of the voice, the following example will show you.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of a monk of Monte Cassino, who on Easter Eve, vanished after blessing the candle.

As I have learnt, not from any book, but from the account given me by a man illustrious both for his life and learning, there was a monk in Monte Cassino, who had a most delightful voice. When on Easter Eve, clad in priestly dress, he was blessing the candle, and in impressive tones was chanting the solemn melody of that benediction, and his voice was sounding in the ears of all like music at a feast, as soon as the blessing of the candle was over, he vanished from sight. And it is not known even to this day by whom he was carried off or whither he went.

Novice.—Suppose he were carried off by an angel of the Lord?

Monk.—His brethren who knew his life did not think so; they feared that the cause of his disappearance was rather the sin of vainglory than any merit of devotion. Hear what Augustine says: "As often as the singing gives me more pleasure than the subject of the song, so often do I confess that I sin grievously." And that mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit, the blessed Pope Gregory also says: "When a pleasant voice is the object of our ambition, true meekness of life is forsaken." Here is an example.

CHAPTER IX.

Of clerks, who were singing in a spirit of pride, and whose voices the devil put into a sack.

Once when certain clerks were singing vociferously in a church, that is, loudly and without devotion, and raising on high tumultuous voices, a certain religious, who happened

to be present, saw a demon standing in a prominent place, holding a capacious sack in his left hand, and with his right hand widely extended, he caught the voices of the singers, and put them into the sack. When the office was over, and they were congratulating each other, as those who had praised God well and heartily, he, who had seen the vision, said: "You have indeed sung well, but you have sung a sack full." When they wondered, and asked him why he said this, he told them the vision. This I heard from a man of very great authority, an abbot of the Cistercian Order. These examples throw no reflection upon heartiness of devotion in praising God in psalm and hymn, but only upon vainglory. How pleasing to Him is the uplifting of the voice in devotion, you will hear plainly in the fifth chapter of the next book; and there too you will find how greatly the demons rejoice when the voice is upraised in psalmody without humility. Hear now a very terrible instance of preaching with a view to praise and gain.

CHAPTER X.

Of a priest who had taken the cross, and whom the devil attacked after a sermon had been delivered by a certain preacher of the cross.

When Oliver the scholasticus of Cologne, mentioned in the second book, was preaching the cross in Bruges and Ghent, cities of Flanders, a priest named Siger, wearing a religious dress and having a cross on the breast of his cassock like a Templar, introduced himself to Brother Bernard, our fellow monk, who was then the assistant preacher and colleague of Oliver. This man was of handsome face and imposing presence, and very eloquent in his own dialect. He offered Bernard a gem of many colours and said that he had brought it from Ceuta, and that it was of such virtue as to bring success

to any who wore it. But Bernard said: "Sir, I must decline your gifts, you will soon discover if I can help you with the Master in any way within reason"; for it seemed to be his desire to get authority from Oliver to preach; and the same day permission was given him to address the people.

On the following day, after Bernard, at the station next appointed, had preached a moving sermon to the crowd, as soon as the sermon was over, Siger, who was then present, fell headlong to the ground, with contortions of the body as of one possessed, as indeed he was. Master Oliver, coming up immediately with his clerks, made the sign of the cross over the man, and had him carried into the church and laid before the altar, where the poor wretch poured forth a stream of blasphemies and horrible words against God and against Oliver himself. Then he was fastened to a cart with straps and sent to his friends; and it is said that the devil carried him off on the fifth day in accordance with a previous threat.

Now from this man's obsession and death we can see that his preaching was not for the sake of devotion, but rather of ambition. He is said also to have been an apostate, and in some way to have obtained letters from the lord pope, allowing him to enter the province. Others said that he had been in that excommunicated ship, which carried arms to sell to the Saracens in Ceuta.

Novice.—It astonishes me that the Lord should punish contempt so severely in this man, while there are so many priests to-day who handle most unworthily the sacred mysteries of Christ, and only preach Him at their convenience.

Monk.—I think he was made an example for other priests, both that they should not trouble that pure preaching of the cross, which was being done only for the honour of Christ, and also, because of the merits of Oliver. How severely at that time Christ punished deceits and insults cast upon Him in His preachers, you have an example in the seventh chapter of the second book concerning Gottschalk the usurer, who cunningly cheated the Pope's dispensator; you will also have another in the next chapter about an old, pride-ridden woman, who jeered at Master Arnold, Oliver's disciple, when he was preaching.

CHAPTER XI.

Of an old woman, who hindered Maſter Arnold, when preaching the croſs, by dancing round and jeering at him.

When this Arnold was a paſtor at Burgende, which is a town of Over-Yſſel, and his parishioners on the day of S. Peter and S. Paul, were celebrating some annual feſtivity with dances and music, he, being now commissioned as a preacher, came to the dance with the croſs, and warned, beſought and ordered all the people to give up their devil's game. When he began to preach his sermon on this spot, some of them came obediently to his preaching, others withdrew angrily, and re-eſtablished the dance a little way off, while some perſiſted in a ſtubborn refusal. Among the laſt was a foolish and proud old woman, who, as often as in circling round in the dance she came near to God's prieſt, ſtared back at him and jeered as she sang. Within three days she died suddenly, and the good man mourned for her as if he had killed her with his own hand. Since the devil tempts so many through the vice of pride, let all men, particularly the religious and cloiſtered, take especial care so to conduct themselves in words, geſtures and clothing, and everything else external, that they may not be noticeable for the vice of pride in the eyes of the world.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Philip, King of the French, who reproved a Black monk for the tightness of his leggings.

In France a certain noble made repeated attacks upon a Benedictine monaſtery; and the abbot and brethren determined to send one of the monks to Philip who was king at the time,

to tell him of the knight's violence. A young man of noble birth was chosen as one who would have more weight with the king than any other, because he was so highly connected. When he came before the king, he said: "Sir, this noble without any provocation is harassing our monastery to our continual hurt and injury, and is persecuting our brethren and household with many threats and insults; and our convent humbly prays your majesty that you will bear in mind your heavenly reward, and restrain him from committing these great wrongs and compel him to make due reparation for his robberies.

The king, after considering the carriage and dress of the monk, said: "Sir, who are you, and what is your origin?" And when the youth told him his father's name, the king answered: "You are indeed of noble birth"; and after the king had talked a little more, the monk added: "Truly, sir, he carries off all our goods, and has left us scarcely anything."

To which the king replied: "Truly, sir, that is plain enough in your leggings; for if he had left you any leather, they need not have been so tight; the nobler you are the more humble you ought to be." Then after this rebuke, wishing to be kindly, he added: "You must not be annoyed at my reproof, because I made it for your good. Go back to your monastery, and for the future, that noble shall trouble you no more."

CHAPTER XIII.

Of Philip, King of the Romans, who rebuked an abbot of the Cistercian Order for the same reason.

Philip, King of the Romans, reproved a certain abbot of our Order with a similar remark, which perhaps he took from the aforesaid king of the French. When the abbot, riding upon a horse, came to speak with him about the needs of his

house, the king looked at his leggings, which were indeed very close fitting, and asked him from whence he came. When the abbot answered: "Sir, from a very poor house," the king said: "That may easily be seen from your leggings, for leather is evidently precious there." The abbot was confused by this remark.

Novice.—Pride is very deservedly put to confusion.

CHAPTER XIV.

Also of an abbot, whose horse's caracolings would not allow him to speak with Frederick, King of the Romans.

Monk.—Last year a certain abbot of our Order, well known to me, rode to the Court, desiring to speak with Frederick, King of the Romans, who had succeeded his uncle Philip as emperor. When he came into the presence, his horse began to whinny, curvet and prance in such a way that he could not, with all his efforts, get near to the king who was sitting upon a very quiet beast.

Novice.—What could so great a prince have thought?

Monk.—I think he was a good deal scandalised. For a similar thing had happened before on the same horse, when the abbot once came to see me, and I was scandalised myself not a little by the sight of him upon such a horse. Indeed, when he had with much confusion withdrawn from the king's presence, he refused to ride that too spirited horse again. This abbot was a simple-minded old man, very humble and strict in his life, although he showed so little circumspection in this feat of horsemanship.

Novice.—What rightly displeases the world in religious men cannot be pleasing in the sight of God.

Monk.—You say truth, for, while we owe to God a good conscience, we also owe to men a good reputation. To say

nothing of the scandal caused in the world by the pride of the religious, when Jews and pagans see pride or the signs of pride in Christian men, they abhor the Christian religion, and the name of Christ is blasphemed through such Christians. About this I will tell you the words of a certain Saracen, words which are well worth remembering.

CHAPTER XV.

Of a pagan who said that the Christians were driven out of Acre for their pride and gluttony.

Brother William, formerly our chamberlain, had been canon of Utrecht before his conversion. When he was a young man, he had taken the cross, and had gone over the sea for the sake of the holy Sepulchre. Before his ship entered the harbour of Acre, both he and the other pilgrims saw the light of fires in different places round the city before dawn. When they asked the sailors what these fires were, they replied: "In the summer weather, owing to the heat the citizens set up tents outside the town for the sake of coolness." Thinking this to be the explanation, they went on into the harbour, and then for the first time learnt that the Saracens were in possession of the city; for at this time, as the result of our sins, the Holy Land had been given into the hands of Saladin, King of Syria, during the reign of the Emperor Frederick.

Now Noradin, the son of Saladin, a man of a kindly and humane nature, was at that time governing the city; and when he saw a Christian ship in the harbour, and guessed why it was there from the fact of its being alone, he took pity on the Christians, and sent in a boat to the ship a certain pagan noble, well versed in the French tongue, to tell them to have no fear. Up to that hour they had been in suspense, not knowing whether they were to be killed or made prisoners.

Now there was in the ship a certain Christian noble from Germany who was at the point of death, and he sent to Noradin, through the same pagan, all his arms, which were very beautiful, together with three war horses, begging him to spare the lives of his brethren. "I," he said, "had vowed to serve Christ with these arms for three years, but, as I now know, it is not His will." Christian messengers were also sent, one of whom was Brother William, because of his knowledge of the French tongue, to present these gifts to the prince.

Now when these presents were brought to Noradin, he took them into his hands, one by one with much reverence and kissed them all, the coat of mail, the shield, the helmet, and the sword; he also kissed the horses, and sent back a message that he would come himself to visit the sick man. Meanwhile the knight died, and a stone being carefully fastened to his body, he was buried in the sea; and another sick knight, also a noble, was placed in his bed.

In the morning the prince, embarking with many galleys of different colours, came to the ship, climbed upon it, and after giving thanks for the presents, sat down by the sick man's bed, and consulted with his physician, whom he had brought with him, about the knight's recovery. He gave him also some fruits of a very rare kind, which he said were grown in his father's garden at Damascus. Then he said to the invalid: "For your sake I will show kindness to all Christians." When they asked from him a safe conduct to the Holy City of Jerusalem, which was still held by the Christians, he replied: "It would not be safe for you, nor creditable to me, if you should be injured and my safe conduct violated by any of the robber bands which are now thronging all the approaches to the city." On leaving the ship he bade farewell to the sick man and to the others, giving them leave to return home, and protecting them against Saracen attacks by the seal of the royal spear.

Then the aforesaid noble pagan, taking back Brother William with him into the city questioned him as follows: "Tell me, O youth, how the Christians keep the law of Christ in your country." He, unwilling to tell the actual truth, replied: "Fairly well." Then said the admiral: "I

will tell you the practice of the Christians of this land. My father was a great noble, and sent me to the king of Jerusalem that I might learn French in his house, and he in turn sent his son to my father to learn the Saracen language; and so it came about that I know well and intimately the manner and life of the Christians. There was not a single citizen of Jerusalem too rich to take money for handing over his sister or daughter or even his own wife to the desires of the pilgrims, who were thus despoiled of the reward of all their labours. They were all so enslaved by the pleasures of gluttony and the flesh that they differed in no way from brute beasts. Indeed pride was lord over them to such an extent that they never wearied of pondering how they might cut and tuck and slash their robes; and the same thing may be said about their gaiters." And he added: "Look at my clothing and my gaiters, how round, how ample, how simply and modestly made." In truth he had, as the same William told us, sleeves as loose and ample as those of a monk. In his robes there was no extravagance or fancifulness of pleat and tuck, although the material was costly. "See," he said, "it is for these vices that God has cast out from this land the haughty and luxurious Christians, for He could no longer suffer their many iniquities. Not by our own arm have we won the country." And last of all he added this: "We fear none of your kings, not even your Emperor Frederick; but, as we read in our books, a Christian emperor will soon arise, Otto by name, who will restore this land and the city of Jerusalem to the Christian religion."

When we heard this, we hoped that the prophecy would be fulfilled in the Emperor Otto the Saxon,[1] but alas! he died two years ago. At that time Saladin showed great humanity to the Christians. When the Christian army was defeated, and partly slain, partly captured and the rest dispersed, he allowed the survivors of those cities, which surrendered voluntarily, to remain in their own towns, though under good guard. After a few days he enquired from his officers how the Christians were behaving and received the reply: "Sir, they live just like animals, zealous only for amusements and the

[1] Otto IV, d. 1118.

pleasures of gluttony." Then in anger he ordered them to be expelled from the cities.

Novice.—Alas! alas! that the Christian should hold almost as the law of his life, that which the Jew abhors and the pagan cries shame upon!

Monk.—Let this be enough about the temptation of pride; let us now consider that of anger.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of anger.

Anger is an unreasoning disturbance of the mind, or, according to another definition, anger is a temporary madness of an excited mind, burning with the desire of revenge. From anger are born quarrels, excitements, insults, outbursts, provocations, blasphemies. Anger may either lie hid in the heart, or break out into words, or into violence (Prov. xxix. 22; Ecclus. xxvii. 30; James iii. 16).

CHAPTER XVII.

Of one who slew his fellow servant because of an angry word.

Two servants of our household quarrelled together in words, and one of them was so inflamed with anger that he was like a madman; and meeting the other outside the monastery, slew him all unsuspicious of any attack. Strong must have been this man's temptation (James iii. 5). I have known some so tempted by one little word that they have become apostate. These in truth were signified by the sixth plague

of Egypt, to wit, *the boils breaking out with blains* (Ex. ix. 9); that is, anger with madness, for apostasy is madness. Anger is natural, but when that emotion becomes immoderate, it is branded as a vice.

Novice.—I should like now to hear some examples about religious men, so that our anger may be restrained and we may be the more kindled to the virtue of patience. For in the world, anger and impatience are scarce considered at all, and men are universally despised, if they do not avenge themselves when provoked.

Monk.—Do you wish to have examples by which you may learn how dangerous it is, and how displeasing to God, when those who are in a subordinate position are impatient and angry with their superiors, even when provoked?

Novice.—Yes, indeed.

Monk.—I will tell you the facts just as I heard them from the mouth of him to whom they happened.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of a prior, to whom was shown at night a vision of Christ, bound to the cross by thorns.

A certain prior of our Order, a man of good and strict life, was sharply rebuked by his abbot more than he deserved; more than was necessary, and very frequently. This became a great temptation to him, and he was unable to endure these rebukes with a tranquil mind, as he ought to have done. The Lord, wishing by the example of His Passion to cool the heat of his temptation, and to show that even unjust superiors ought to be cheerfully endured for His sake, taught him by the following example.

In the night when he was sleeping lightly, it seemed to him that he and his abbot were carrying a crucifix, the abbot on the

right hand and himself on the left. While they were supporting Him thus equally balanced, the arm of the cross which the prior was holding slipped from his grasp, and the other rose up, so that there was no longer any equal balance. Then the prior awoke, and understood the vision, and said to himself: "What are you doing, unhappy one? you are not bearing the body of the Lord equally with your abbot, because you are nursing rancour against him in your heart."

He interpreted truly that the monastery was the body of Christ, and that the strict rule of the Order was the cross, to which the brethren were nailed by obedience; that it is especially the duty of the abbot and prior to carry, to hold and to support the convent, which is Christ's body; to carry it by prayer, to hold it by discipline and to support it by consolation; the abbot in the place of a father, the prior in that of a mother. When the abbot and the prior are not in full concord, they carry the body of Christ with unequal balance.

Now since this prior was still uncorrected by this vision, and his interpretation of it, which I have just shown, and was not set free from the grudge he felt, the Lord showed him another vision, the more efficacious as it was the more terrible. One night when asleep, there came to him a very striking and convincing vision; he saw opposite him the Saviour, not in any painting or sculpture, but in His actual flesh, hanging upon the cross. He was bound to it with bonds of thorns in five parts of His body; one chain surrounded His head, passing over His forehead and temples; another was about His breast; a third bound His right hand, and a fourth His left; while the fifth was over His feet, enclosing both his ankles and the wood of the cross; as if the Lord were saying to him: "For thy sake I suffered these dire torments, and thou canst not with a quiet mind bear from thy abbot, I say not blows, but even words for My sake. Obedience, which thou likest not, is a trouble to thee, yet for thy sake I was obedient to the Father even to death and the insults of the cross, which are like chains of thorns."

As he told me, the Lord immediately granted him to understand the vision as follows: "In that Christ, who is the Head of the church, was bound with thorns, He shows thee that

thou oughteſt to obey thy head, that is the abbot, even in difficulties. That He was bound over the breaſt teaches thee that thy will ought to be in concord with that of the abbot, for the heart lies in the breaſt, and the will is in the heart." Now his temptation had gone so far, that he had made up his mind to change his monaſtery if he could. "The chains," he said, "bind His hands to show that thou oughteſt to do nothing but what He commands; and that He shows Himself bound by the feet to the cross with thorns, signifies that it is not lawful for thee to change thy monaſtery without His consent, but whether thou ſtand or walk, it muſt be only in accordance with His will." By these two visions he was both terrified and inſtructed and for the future, he ſtudied to endure with a tranquil mind, for Chriſt's sake, whatever his abbot said or did.

Novice.—As I see it, it is dangerous for us to ſtrive with our superiors.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of a cellarer, whom in a vision the crucified rejected because he had given too rough an answer to his prior.

Monk.—Laſt year a certain chief cellarer was arguing with his prior about certain outside matters, and thought that he had every reason to show his anger. That night the Saviour appeared to him upon the cross and ſtretched upon the ground, and over His body was spread a thin and transparent covering. Now when he desired to draw aside the veil, and to kiss His wounds, the Figure with repelling hand indignantly put him away, as if to say: "Thou art not worthy to touch My body, for thou haſt provoked me but now in the person of thy prior." At once he aroused himself from sleep, and recognising the

cause of his repulse, as soon as matins was over, in my presence, threw himself at the feet of the prior and begged forgiveness for his outburſt.

Novice.—If he who is angry with his brother is in danger of the judgment, no longer can I doubt that he is in danger of a greater penalty, who is angry with his father, *i.e.* his superior.

Monk.—It is as you say; because we owe to our fathers, whether carnal or spiritual, greater reverence than to our brothers.

Novice.—What if from a raging heart an angry word be hurled againſt the saints, or what is more, againſt God Himself.

Monk.—Such a word arising from anger is blasphemy, and is often punished very severely by God.

CHAPTER XX.

Of a scholar who died within three days because he had cursed the holy Abraham.

Monk.—A certain scholar at Paris, when our abbot was a ſtudent there, uttered an insulting word againſt the holy Abraham, and when he died three days afterwards, all, who had heard what he said, knew that the Lord had avenged his saint by this punishment of death.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of a knight, whose son was killed by a thunderbolt, because the father had blasphemed againſt the bad weather.

Five years ago, at the time of those violent thunderſtorms when the harveſt was hindered by almoſt daily rains, a certain

knight of our province, who lived in a township very near to us, when he saw the sky in the weſt growing dark with rain-clouds, said angrily : (he was always a man of rather unbridled speech) " See, here comes the devil again!" Scarcely had he utered the words when, behold, a thunderbolt ſtruck his little son on his nurse's lap without injuring the woman. And further for that blasphemy he was afflicted in other of his possessions, both in buildings and cattle, that he might learn for the future not to blaspheme. This happened at the same time that our farm near the town of Cassel was ſtruck by lightning. From this it is clear how foolish it is for a mortal man, who is but duſt and ashes, *to ſtretch forth his mouth unto the heavens* (Ps. lxxiii. 9). See how anger produces ill consequences, not only like this, but of countless other kinds.

Novice.—If in this life God punishes so terribly the sin of anger, surely in the life to come He will grievously afflict the slaves of this vice.

Monk.—You will learn this in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of a shrewish maiden, who when buried was consumed by fire from the waiſt upwards.

The bailiff of a neighbouring town called Königswinter told me a very terrible ſtory. Not long ago, he said, a monk, a ſtranger in these parts, was in our church at mass, and near him were some fashionable matrons, the wives of certain knights, whose empty chatter interfered very much with his prayers. When the mass was over he drew some of these knights aside and said to them : " Sirs, I came to this church to pray, but the devil prompted these ladies to make so much chattering and whispering round me that I could not pray at all. I should like to tell you a terrible ſtory of what happened

in my own time and in my own town. There was a certain high-born maiden, the daughter of wealthy parents, who had so violent a temper and was such a quarrelsome scold, that wherever she was, whether at home or in church, there she ſtirred up quarrels and revived old enmities, so that he who could escape the scourge of her tongue, thought himself a happy man.

At laſt she died and was buried in the parvis of the church. When we came to the church the next morning, we saw that her tomb was emitting smoke like a furnace. Terrified at this and eager to discover what it meant, we threw out the earth; and behold, the upper part of her body was consumed by fire, while the lower part from the waiſt downwards was seen to be untouched.

Novice.—What did this signify?

Monk.—I agree with what was said by those who had known her life: God willed to show in her body that He was pleased with her virtue of chaſtity, and that He abhorred her vice of ill-temper. Because she was a virgin, the lower part of her body was preserved uninjured for the sake of her chaſtity, but because she was so prone to anger, her heart, her liver, her tongue, her hands, and all the adjacent parts, were devoured by fire, for anger is a fire (Ecclus. viii. 4; Ecclus. xxviii. 11, Vulg.; James iii. 6).

Novice.—What you say so terrifies me, that I purpose never again to lose my temper with my brethren.

Monk.—Then you will be happy (James i. 26; James iii. 8, 9; Prov. xviii. 21, Vulg.).

Novice.—By what metaphor can the tongue be said to have hands?

Monk.—Because if it be harsh, if often becomes a cause of death to body and soul, but if it be soft and gracious, it is a cause of life to both. Wherefore Solomon: *A ſoft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words ſtir up anger* (Prov. xv. 1). This was fulfilled in David, into whose hands Nabal, by his *grievous words,* put a sword for his own death, but Abigail withdrew it by her *ſoft answer* (1 Sam. xxv.). Because *death lies in the hands of the tongue,* the wisdom of our Creator has set before it a double wall, one of bone and one of

flesh, i.e. the teeth and the lips; but He made them both to open, that life might pass through; and to speak only what is good is life-giving.

Novice.—I like what you say.

Monk.—Let this be enough about anger.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of envy and her daughters.

Envy follows anger, and is born of it. For envy is a chronic anger, namely, the hatred of another's happiness. Her daughters are: hatred, backbiting, detraction, delight in the adversity of a neighbour, affliction in his prosperity. It was this vice that transformed an angel into a devil, this vice that cast man out of Paradise (Wisd. ii. 24). To show how grievous and dangerous this sin is, John in his epistle closes with a brief exhortation, and says: *Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer* (1 John iii. 15). The more this vice is concealed, the more dangerous it is.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of a monk, who, being accused by the envy of another, was imprisoned and gloriously delivered.

Not long ago a certain monk, attacked and conquered by the pangs of envy, accused one of the younger brethren before the abbot, imputing to him very foul crimes. Now when the abbot did not believe him, he reserved his accusation for a

greater punishment when the Visitor should come. What need of more? The guile of the envious monk had so great weight with this Visitor, that in the presence of them all at Chapter, he threw in the teeth of this youth all the vices that had been reported to him, and when the young monk denied them, and called God to witness his innocence, he refused to believe him and ordered him to be thrown into prison in a scanty robe. After the departure of the Visitor, the justice of God struck down the envious accuser with a sudden sickness; and fearing death was at hand, he confessed that he had accused him falsely through envy; and when by his confessor's advice he had made this clear to the elders, the truth was immediately conveyed to the Visitor, who returned at once in consternation to the monastery, went to the prison and prostrate at the feet of the monk, begged his forgiveness, because he had sinned against him in ignorance; and afterwards brought him out with great honour, giving no heed to his modest reluctance. All this was told me by an abbot, who was present at that visitation.

Novice.—Surely that monk earned great merit under so heavy a trial?

Monk.—That trial was to him what the furnace is to the gold, the file to the iron, the flail to the grain, the winepress to the grape; for he kept his patience in tribulation. To the envious monk, his envy was as poison to the stomach, as the moth to clothing, as blight to the flower, or as consumption to the body.

Novice.—If you know of any further examples of temptations by envy, I pray you tell me them.

Monk.—Because envy is a hidden disease, no example occurs to me at present, which is either worthy to be remembered or necessary for edification. Nevertheless I will tell you of a certain meritorious envy, which you will be pleased to hear.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of a girl who envied the zeal of her ſiſter in her ſtudies.

Laſt year in a monaſtery of our Order, called Yesse, in Frisia, two little girls were put to learn lessons together. Since both were zealous scholars, a rivalry arose between them that each might surpass the other in induſtry and knowledge. Meanwhile it happened that one of them fell ill; and she, envious of the advance of her companion, began to be sorely tried by her fear that the other might make great ſtrides in her absence; and so she asked for the prioress and made her prayer to her, saying: "Good miſtress, when my mother comes to see me, I will ask her for six denarü, which I will give to you, if you will ſtop my siſter from going on with her ſtudies until I am well again, because I am afraid of her getting beyond me." At which the prioress laughed, in great admiration of the child's zeal.

Novice.—Tell me, I pray you, the right medicine againſt envy.

Monk.—Loving service.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Example againſt envy put forward by Maſter Rudolph.

Maſter Rudolph, the Scholaſticus of Cologne, whom I knew well and frequently heard lecture, used to teach his pupils againſt envy by insiſting upon this example: a certain Brother held one of his Brethren in such abhorrence, that he could not look upon him without real torture. The other, perceiving this, and eager to heal the wound in his Brother's

heart, used all his zeal to draw out, by loving attentions, the affection of this Brother, who was so dangerously tempted, nay rather, who was altogether overcome by this temptation. He turned and smoothed his pillow, he brushed his clothes, he arranged his shoes by his bed, and so far as he possibly could, did everything he knew to please him. And he succeeded, for that envy was finally conquered by his services, and the sanity of the other restored, so that he was delivered from that poison of hatred, and learned to love more than all the rest that Brother, whom formerly he could not look upon without intense dislike. Let this be enough for examples of the vice of envy.

Because this vice seems to be more hateful than all others to *God* who *is love,* therefore it is more to be shunned by every man than any other vice.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of accidie and her daughters.

Accidie holds the fourth place, and is a vice very apt to tempt the Religious.

Novice.—The name of this vice has a somewhat barbarous sound ; I should like to know what accidie is, and from what its name is derived.

Monk.—Accidie is a depression born from a troubled mind ; or a sense of weariness and excessive bitterness of heart, by which spiritual happiness is cast out, and the judgment is overthrown by a headlong fall into dispair. It is called accidie, as if it were an acid, which makes all spiritual exercises bitter and insipid to us. Seneca says of it : " Great are the losses that arise from negligence." The progeny of accidie or depression are : malice, rancour, cowardice, despair,

reluctance to obey, and the straying of the thoughts into forbidden places. Accidie is a common temptation and throws many into despair.

Novice.—Please give examples of the temptations of this vice.

Monk.—Hear how dangerous it is to be attacked by accidie.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of a monk whom accidie prevented from rising for his morning vigil.

The devil had, as was shown by the event, filled a certain monk so full of accidie, that whenever the time came to get up for matins, he was immediately covered with sweat from a kind of cowardice and fear of the service. Thinking this to be caused by sickness, he lay still, drawing the clothes over him again, and *as a door,* according to the Proverb of Solomon *turneth upon its hinges, so did* that *sluggard turn upon his bed* (Prov. xxvi. 14). One night when all the rest got up at the sound of the bell, and hastened to the divine office, he also tried to rise, but lay down again at the bidding of accidie ; and then he heard from under his bed an unknown voice saying to him quite clearly : " Do not get up, do not interrupt your sweating, because it is not good for you." Then for the first time he realised that he was being mocked by the devil through the vice of accidie, and shook himself free from that imaginary sweat, and never again consented readily to such slothfulness. Be sure of this, that the devil is not permitted to tempt us either as much or as long as he would like, lest we should be deceived by him and perish. Often is he compelled by the power of God to disclose his deceit to those whom he is tempting.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of a priest, upon whom the Crucified turned his back when he went to sleep over his prayers.

One of our monks, who was a priest, was accustomed, after matins had been said, in that interval which the Brethren are wont to spend in prayer or Psalms, to compose himself on one of the benches and go to sleep over his prayer. The Lord, wishing to show him, that this hour and place were not for sleeping but for watch and prayer, appeared to him upon the cross, with His back turned towards him, as if to say: "Because thou art lukewarm and full of accidie, thou art not worthy to behold my face." He himself testified that this had happened to him more than once.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of the temptations and visions of Christian, a monk of Heisterbach.

Another of our monks called Christian, was a youth indeed in age, but of a life so holy that he was looked upon as one of God's saints upon the earth; but he was so infirm of body, that he grew very weary of life. One night in the interval between matins and lauds, wishing to ease the pain in his head, he prostrated himself upon the steps of one of the altars, and there went to sleep in the attitude of prayer. No sooner were his eyes closed, than there appeared to him our glorious Lady, the Virgin Mary, who struck him with her robe and awoke him saying: "Christian, this is not the place for sleep, but for prayer." At once he awoke, and with open eyes saw the back of a female figure disappearing, and heard a gentle voice saying the last words of the above sentence.

Novice.—I understand well from the case of this youth, that all weariness of good works does not arise from vice, but that sometimes it comes from body infirmity.

Monk.—All temptation and infirmity are the result of Adam's sin ; from his fault we have incurred seven penalties ; to wit, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, lassitude, sickness, death. When the action of these penalties is controlled, we are liable to punishment but not to guilt ; when it is unrestrained, we incur both punishment and guilt.

Novice.—To what do you give the name of lassitude?

Monk.—Sleepiness, or fatigue from any kind of labour. Let us be careful then, lest that which is natural be turned into vice ; because vices are generated not only from natural qualities, by their abuse, but even from virtues. For example, when justice goes beyond due limit, it becomes cruelty ; too much pity becomes weakness ; intemperate zeal becomes anger ; excess of gentleness deserves the names of laziness and accidie ; and so you may judge about the rest.

Novice.—I think that this youth must have been of no small merit, since the Blessed Virgin aroused him in so familiar a fashion.

Monk.—Of how great merit he was, and how dear to the citizens of the heavenly country will be shown by what follows. Though, on account of his severe pains in the head, he had received in the Chapter a general licence to stay away from solemn vigils whenever he wished, he scarcely ever was absent from the choir except when absolutely obliged. Indeed, after the matins for the sick, he would return to the church and habitually stay there longer than the Rule demanded. One day our abbot, Dom Henry, then a simple monk, said to him : " Good brother Christian, you often tell us about your severe headaches, and yet you will not use the indulgence granted you," and he answered : " I simply cannot stay away ; for when I stand outside the choir and hear the others chanting, my heart is tortured that I cannot go in, because I remember the consolations with which God delights my soul when I am among them." When he heard this the lord abbot, taking advantage of his special friendship, asked him what these consolations were, and, after much insistent

entreaty, succeeded in getting him to speak. He told him, that often, when he was in the choir during the Psalms, he saw blessed angels passing round, and, what was far more glorious, the King of angels Himself the Man Christ Jesus.

Novice.—Truly great gifts were vouchsafed to this youth !

Monk.—Yes, and deservedly. For ever since he came to the Order, he had never been without temptation both from his severe pains in the head, and also in his longing for the heavenly country. He bore this scourge from the Lord with so much patience as to astonish all his brethren. Once the Lord, who is no tempter of the wicked, took away from him the grace of tears, which he had bountifully bestowed upon him, and this was a sore trial.

Novice.—Before you go further, I should like to know why God takes away graces of this kind from holy men.

Monk.—That withdrawal seems to me to have four causes : first, that the grace may not be cheapened by uninterrupted continuity ; second, that the heart may not be lifted up with pride by it's enjoyment ; third, that it may be sought with greater eagerness, and may be cherished more diligently when regained ; and the fourth cause is venial sin.

Novice.—I like what you say.

Monk.—Christian, indeed, grieved bitterly for the lost grace, and, imputing the loss to his sins, prayed night and day for its recovery, but without success ; and then he remembered the Lord's cross, and said within himself : " If I could but kiss the precious wood on which the Saviour shed his blood, I should recover my grace of tears." Full of this longing, on a certain festival, he went to the altar after mass and kissed the sacred wood, and lo ! he recovered the lost grace more abundantly than before.

Novice.—We have two crosses ; will you tell me which of them it was?

Monk.—That which came from Apulia, the wood of which is black. At that time we had not the other, which is red : this was given us by Henry of Ulmen, and had been taken from the church of S. Sophia in Constantinople.

Novice.—I should like to know by what sort of death a man of so much grace departed from the world.

Monk.—Often he noticed an aromatic odour rising from his hands, so strong that he marvelled at it, and could say with the Bride, whose member he was, quite literally: *My hands dropped with myrrh and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh* (Cant. v. 5).

Novice.—Perchance he had hands that were undefiled?

Monk.—Know that he was not virgin in body, that you may understand that the odour arose more from virtue of the soul than from virginity. Yet he too, like everyone else, did lose spiritual grace by giving way to bodily appetite. Although he was weak and sickly, yet for many days before his death he was still more searchingly purged in the furnace of pain, and purified like gold in the fire. One night in sleep the holy martyr and virgin Agatha appeared to him and among other comforting words, said: "Christian, let not this sickness seem burdensome to you, because these sixty days will be counted to you for sixty years." When he awoke, he told this to certain others, because he did not understand the meaning of the vision; and some interpreted it as meaning that the bitterness of that sickness would purge away his sins as much as sixty years in purgatory. Others thought, with surer insight, that the pain of those sixty days and the patience with which it was borne would have for him the merit of sixty years. It was on the Vigil of S. Agatha, which was the sixtieth day from the night in which the message came to him, that he surrendered his soul to God. That you may know how true is the word of the prophet: *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father* (Ezek. xviii. 30), I must tell you that this monk was the son of a clerk who was a canon of the Cathedral of Bonn.

Novice.—I have heard that some have been greatly terrified because they were not of legitimate birth. It would be good for them to hear such a story as this.

Monk.—Whether they be legitimate, or the sons of fornication, or adultery or incest, all men before baptism are held bound by the same chain. For all of us are born children of wrath; by baptism we are made children of grace; but those alone are blessed, who by a good life and final grace will be counted amongst the children of glory. What you

say recalls to my memory how a saintly lay-brother, the son of a saintly priest, was so tempted by the fact of his birth, so saddened and troubled, that he almost fell into despair.

Novice.—May I know the outcome of his temptation?

Monk.—I knew him myself, but what I am going to tell you I heard from an abbot who was his familiar friend.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of Henry, the lay-brother of Villers, who was grievously tempted because he was an illegitimate son.

The name of the lay-brother was Henry ; he took the vows in Villers, and was the son of Dom Christian, a monk of Hemmenrode. Of Christian I will tell you wonderful things in the sixteenth chapter of the seventh book—how this Henry served in a hospital for the poor, and was a man of much humility, patience and compassion, and because he feared God so much, feared all the more to be separated from Him. For the devil had put into his heart a kind of despair, as if he said : " Because thou art not a son of legitimate birth, thou shalt not be an heir of the kingdom of Heaven." This thought became such an obsession to him, that he could take none of the consolation set before him by his confessors, whether from the Scriptures, or from examples. But God had mercy upon him, and one night, when the temptation was overwhelming, He carried him in his sleep to a huge building, in which He showed him a vast multitude both of men and women ; and a voice said to him : " Henry, seest thou this multitude? they are all indeed of legitimate birth, but all are reprobate, except thyself." Immediately awaking, he rejoiced with great joy, because he understood that the vision had come for his sake. From that moment the temptation ceased, and as long as he lived he gave thanks to God, *who forsaketh not them that hope in Him* (Judith xiii. 17. Vulg.).

Novice.—Is it accidie to sleep in church?

Monk.—Habit has engendered out of it the vice of accidie, because some palliate it, by calling it infirmity, while in truth this vice arises much more from the work of the devil, than from infirmity.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of the serpent, which brother Conrad saw on the back of a lay-brother, who was asleep in the choir.

Once when I was talking with a very religious lay-brother of ours of those who frequently fall asleep in our choir, he said: "Be very sure that such somnolence is of the devil; for one day in the summer, when lauds were being sung, I saw in broad daylight a serpent creeping over the back of brother William, who often allows himself to go to sleep in his stall, and forthwith I realised that it was the devil, who was feeding upon his somnolence." He said that he had often seen a vision of this kind in connection with this same lay-brother, and brother Richard bore the same testimony. The lay-brother who saw this was named Conrad, about whom I shall tell you many more excellent things in the eighth book. The devil tempts and harries many through somnolence, and this in different ways.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of a lay-brother, whose eyes were closed by a cat, when he was giving way to sleep in the choir.

In Hemmenrode there was a certain lay-brother, who was full of accidie in church, and almost always went to sleep.

On his head another lay-brother often saw a cat sitting, and as soon as it placed its paws upon this brother's eyes, immediately he began to yawn. Now when he learnt this from him to whom the vision had been vouchsafed, he determined that the devil should mock him no longer, and so prepared his ſtall in such a way that if its occupants went to sleep, it should slip and throw him to the ground. Thus the demon of somnolence was shaken off by this device, and the lazy brother grew more fervent in the service of God. This was told me by a lay-brother of the same convent.

How sorely the demons mock those who sleep in such a place, you shall learn from the following example.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the monk Frederick, who went to sleep in the choir, and was ſtruck in the face by the devil with wisp of ſtraw.

One of our monks called Frederick, though a good man in all other reſpects, was notorious for his vice of somnolence. One night, before our convent went out from Hemmenrode, he went to sleep during the singing of the Psalms at matins, and in his sleep saw a tall and misshapen man ſtanding in front of him, holding in his hand a filthy wisp of ſtraw, such as grooms use for rubbing down horses. This man looked at the monk with an impudent leer, and said: "Why ſtandeſt thou here, sleeping all night long, thou son of the Great Lady?" and then ſtruck him over the face with the filthy ſtraw. He woke at once in terror, and drawing back inſtinctively from the blow, ſtruck his head sharply againſt the wall. You may imagine what merriment among the reſt of the monks!

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of a monk, round whom a number of hogs were seen to be crowding, while he was asleep in his ſtall.

Not long ago I heard a ſtory which I ought not to leave untold. In the same monaſtery there is a monk, who nearly always goes to sleep during the office, so that it is rare that he ever opens his mouth in the Psalms. Round him hogs are often seen, and their gruntings heard ; I think because they are feeding upon the husks that fall from his mouth.

Novice.—What are these husks, and what do they signify?

Monk.—Husks are empty pods, and they signify the words of the Psalms robbed of all goodness, such as are uttered by the somnolent without any real meaning ; and these words, thus half-heartedly spoken, are only thrown out to be picked up by swine, that is, by demons. But they who are fully awake and sing with heart and soul, they who chant the psalms with genuine intention, are fed with all their sweetness, because they reap the grace which lies beneath the prophetic words. These in the future life, together with the singers of the heavenly Jerusalem, will be fed by the Lord with *the flour of wheat* (Ps. cxlvii. 14), that is, the vision of His Godhead.

Novice.—I gather clearly from what you have said that weariness in spiritual exercises comes from the devil.

Monk.—It is as you say ; because there are some, who, as soon as they begin to chant, to pray, or to read, are immediately oppressed with sleep ; on their beds they lie awake, in the church they are full of sleep. The same thing is true about hearing the word of God ; when they liſten to worldly speech, they are wakeful enough ; but when the word of God is expounded, they quickly fall asleep.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the lord abbot Gevard, who by the ſtory of Arthur, roused the monks who were asleep during his sermon.

When the abbot Gevard, the predecessor of the present abbot, was preaching to us in the Chapterhouse on a certain feſtival, several of the Brethren, chiefly lay-brothers, went to sleep, and some even began to snore. He noticed this and cried out: "Liſten, brethren, liſten; I have something new and important to tell you: There was once a king named Arthur"—there he ſtopped, and then went on: "You see, my brothers, to how sad a pass we have come; when I was speaking to you about God, you fell asleep; but as soon as I began a secular ſtory, you all woke up, and began to liſten with eager ears." I myself was present at that sermon. But the devil uses somnolence to tempt and hinder, not only spiritual persons, but those also who are in the world.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of the knight Henry, who made his Lent with us, and of the ſtone on which he slept during prayers.

A certain knight of Bonn named Henry once made his Lent with us. After he had returned home, he met one day the before-mentioned abbot Gevard, and said to him: "My lord abbot, I wish you would sell me that ſtone which is close to a certain column in your church; I will give you anything you like to ask for it." When he answered: "What good would it be to you?" the other said: "I want to put it at my bedside, because it is of such a nature, that, if anyone who cannot sleep should reſt his head upon it, he will go to sleep

at once." During the penitential season the devil had wrought this snare for him, that as soon as he came to the church and reſted his head upon this ſtone to pray, sleep immediately crept over him. Another noble, who had made his penitence in Hemmenrode, is reported to have said: "The ſtones of that abbey church are softer than any bed in my caſtle"; for he could not help going to sleep upon them at the time of prayer.

Novice.—If accidie in the service of God were not a grievous fault, the devil would not so eagerly invite us to it.

Monk.—How great is the guilt of this vice, let the punishment of one who was full of it, make clear to you.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of a monk who frequently slept in the choir, and who was smitten on the cheek by the Crucified, and died.

It is only two months ago that the lord abbot of Kamper Kloſt told me a very terrible thing about a monk who was always accuſtomed to sleep in church. One night when he was sleeping as usual while the others were chanting, the Crucified came down from the altar, aroused the sleeper, and ſtruck him with so much force upon the cheek that he died within three days.

Novice.—This that you tell me is ſtupendous!

Monk.—A lazy monk provokes the wrath of God and of His holy angels.—Wherefore it is said by Chriſt, through John, to all those afflicted with accidie, in the person of one (Apoc. iii. 15, 16).

Novice.—I remember that you said above that accidie and melancholy were the same vice.

Monk.—It is true, because accidie is melancholy that is born from diſturbance of mind; and from this are born malice and despair, as I will show you in the next example.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Of a young recluse, who doubted the existence of God and the angels, and was taken out of her body and in the spirit saw angels and souls, and then returned to the body.

Last year the abbot of Brumback told our abbot about a very terrible temptation which sprang from melancholy, and this is what he said: "There was in our province a maiden of marriageable age, very beautiful, and the daughter of rich parents. These parents wished her to marry, but she refused, saying: "I will not marry anyone except my Heavenly Spouse, the Lord Jesus." At last the parents, worn out with the obstinacy of the maiden, allowed her to do as she pleased. She, giving thanks as if for victory, caused to be made for herself a cell, in which she was veiled and enclosed by the bishop, and in her solitude served Christ alone with great devotion for several days.

But the devil in hatred of so much virtue shook her with various temptations, and, inflaming the innocent heart of the virgin with the poison of melancholy, brought her in full health to sickness. Soon she began to be tossed to and fro with all kinds of thoughts, to waver in her faith, and to despair of being able to persevere. She was attacked also by weakness of heart, by wasting of the body, by sluggishness in prayer and by grief for her seclusion.

Now while the maiden was thus perilously wavering, the aforesaid abbot of the Cistercian Order, to whose care she had been entrusted by the bishop, came to make her a visitation, and asked how she was, and how she fared; to whom she replied: "Ill am I, and ill do I fare, and I cannot understand why or for whom I am secluded here"; and when the abbot said to her: "For God and the kingdom of heaven"; she answered: "Who knows if there be a God, or any angels with Him? or any souls, or any kingdom of heaven? Who has ever seen such things, who has ever come back to tell us what he has seen?" When the abbot heard such words,

he trembled from head to foot, and turning to the virgin, said: "What is this you say, sister? make the sign of the cross over your breast." She replied: "I say what I think; unless I can see these things, I will not believe. I beg you to let me go out of this place, because I can no longer endure this seclusion."

Then the abbot, realising that such sudden melancholy and despair could only arise from the instigation of the devil, said: "Sister, the enemy of souls is grievously tempting you, because he envies your glory, but do thou stand fast in the faith, *be strong and He shall comfort thine heart, and put thou thy trust in the Lord* (Ps. xxvii. 16). Against the wishes of your friends and relations, you yourself chose this holy life, you yourself longed for this seclusion." And when she received with deaf ears his words of advice and exhortation, the abbot asked her to stay there for at least a week, until he could go to the monastery and return and visit her again. When with difficulty he had obtained her promise, he went to the monastery and laid before the brethren the peril of the virgin, and urged them all to pour forth to God with heartfelt devotion special prayers for her during the coming week; and he himself besought God on her behalf with great earnestness.

When the week was over, he went back to her and said: "How fare you now, my daughter?" and she replied: "Very well indeed, my Father. Never was I better. My joy and consolation during these seven days have been far greater than all my sadness and despair before your coming." And when he asked her the cause of her happiness she said: "Father, I have seen with my own eyes those whose existence I doubted; after you left me, my soul was rapt from my body, and I saw holy angels, I saw the souls of the blessed, I saw the rewards of the just. I saw also with the eyes of my soul my own body lying on the floor of my cell, as bloodless and pallid as withered herbage whose sap was all withdrawn."

When asked by the abbot of the appearance of the soul, she said that it was a spiritual substance, that its form was spherical, something like the globe of the moon, and that it was full of eyes. She said further that when either an angel

or a soul appeared to any one who was still in the body, the apparition always assumed a material form. But when a soul is delivered from the burden of the flesh, then it appears actually as it is to any other soul in the like condition.

Novice.—This vision agrees closely with that of the abbot of Morimond, who, when he came back from the dead, said that his soul was like glass, and had eyes on every side, as I remember you said in the thirty second chapter of the first book.

Monk.—The same recluse brought back also certain information about the coming of Antichrist, which I am unwilling to set down here, because many have been deceived by such prophecies.

Novice.—It fills me with terror to think that the Lord allowed so holy, so pure, so virginal a soul to be harassed with these foul and awful temptations.

Monk.—Unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out, as you will hear from the temptations of another man, and whose temptation was all the more alarming, as it is uncertain how it finally resulted.

CHAPTER XL.

Of a nun, who in her doubt and despair, threw herself into the Moselle.

A few months ago, a certain nun, a woman of advanced age and of great reputed sanctity, was so much troubled by the vice of melancholy, and so much harassed by the spirit of blasphemy, doubt and distrust, that she fell into despair. She began to disbelieve utterly all those articles of the faith which she had accepted from infancy, and which it was her bounden duty to accept ; and she refused to take any further share in the blessed Sacrament. When the sisters, and among them her own niece, asked her why she was thus hardened,

she replied: "I am reprobate," that is, "I am one of those appointed to eternal ruin." One day the prior, greatly moved, said to her: "My sister, unless you come back to your senses from this unbelief, I cannot allow you, after death, to be buried in consecrated ground. "When she heard this, she made no reply, but could not forget his words.

A little after this, some of the sisters had to make a journey; she stole out after them to the bank of the Moselle, by which the convent is situated, and as soon as the boat carrying the sisters had left the shore, she threw herself into the river. Those in the boat heard the splash, but when they looked back, they thought that the object in the water was only a dog; there was, however, in the mercy of God, a man on the bank, who ran quickly to the place to see with greater certainty, and finding that it was indeed a human body, he went into the water and drew her to the shore. By this time others had come up, and when they saw that it was this poor nun, nearly drowned, they were filled with alarm, and did all they could to restore her.

At last they succeeded, and as soon as she had brought up the water she had swallowed, and was able to speak, they asked her: "Why, sister, did you do such a terrible thing?" And she answered: "The prior there," pointing with her finger, "threatened that, when I died, he would have to bury me in unconsecrated ground; and rather than be buried in the open field like a beast, I thought it would be better to be carried down the river." Then they took her back again to the monastery, and watched over her with greater care than before.

You see what misery can be produced by melancholia; this woman had been brought up in the convent from childhood; she was a virgin, chaste, devout, scrupulous and punctual in her religious duties; and I have been told by the prioress of the neighbouring convent that the girls educated by her were better disciplined and more devout than any of the others. But God is very pitiful, and makes trial of His elect in many ways, and I cannot but believe, that He, who so mercifully delivered her from drowning, will have regard to her former good works, and will not suffer her to

perish at the last. I could give you many recent examples of this kind of melancholia, but I fear that the hearing or reading of such things would give no help to the weak.

Novice.—You have already shown me how nothing happens without good reason, and I think that perhaps God permits such things, that no one, however far perfected, may presume upon his virtues or good works, but may refer everything to God, from whom alone are derived both the will and the power for every good work.

Monk.—What you say is true ; and that is why Lot's disobedient wife was turned into a pillar of salt, to be a warning to the wicked, and a stimulus to the well-doer.

CHAPTER XLI.

Of a lay-brother, who, in despair, drowned himself in a fishpond.

It is scarcely three years ago since excess of melancholy brought final despair upon a certain lay-brother. In speaking or writing of these terrible tragedies, I am unwilling to mention the names of places or persons, or to hint at the Order involved, lest I should seem to be casting reflection upon any of my fellow Religious. This brother was well known to me ; from his youth to old age he had lived both respected and liked by all his brethren, so that none in all the Order seemed stricter than he in the observance of the Rule, or more endowed with virtues ; seldom would he speak, and seldom use the accustomed relaxations of the Rule. Yet by some incomprehensible judgment of God, he grew so melancholy and cast down, that he became completely obsessed with fear of his sins, and altogether despairing of eternal life. It was not that he was troubled with any lack of faith, but rather that he lost all hope of salvation ; by no authority of scripture could he be lifted up, by no examples be restored to the

hope of pardon ; though it is believed that he had never been a great sinner. When his brethren asked him what it was that he feared, and why he despaired, he would reply : " I cannot say my prayers as I used, and so I am afraid of hell." Because he was afflicted with this vice of melancholy, accidie laid hold of him, and from the two despair was born in his heart. Placed in the infirmary, one morning, having determined upon death, he went to his superior and said : " I cannot fight against God any longer. The other took little heed of his words, but he went away to the fish-pond near the monastery, threw himself in and was drowned.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of a nun, who, driven mad by a wicked lay-brother, threw herself into a well.

A somewhat similar thing took place last year in a convent of nuns, though the motive was different. I was told by a nun of the same Order, that one of the sisters was so driven mad by the magic arts of a miserable brother, who was clothed in the habit, but not in the spirit of a Religious, that she could not endure the temptations that he had put into her heart. She would not tell her trouble to anyone, but only said : " I want to go out, I want to get away, because I am sorry that I ever came here " ; and when they would not allow her to go, her melancholy increased still more, and when once she found herself alone, she threw herself into the well, and died. When they sought her everywhere and could not find her, one of the sisters remembered that she had threatened to drown herself in the well ; the well was searched, and she was found there dead. It was almost at the same time, that this miserable lay-brother by similar wickedness enticed a nun from another convent and corrupted her, and she, poor soul, never came back from the world.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Of a young girl, who hanged herself from melancholia, at finding herself despised by her lover.

Thirteen years ago, when our monks were returning up the Rhine in a barge from the harveſt, they came to a hamlet near Cologne, called Rodinkirch, and found a young girl lying upon the ground, recently dead. It was said about her that she had given birth to a child by a certain man, and because he had repudiated her, she had taken her life in the violence of her despair.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Of a youth who had gambled away his clothes, and hanged himself in despair.

There was a certain youth at Cologne, some time before this, who had gambled away his clothes, and was rendered so miserable by this loss, that he went up to the solar of his house and hanged himself. You see how dangerous melancholy is, when it is not in accordance with the will of God.

Novice.—What are we to think of the souls of these?

Monk.—If the cause be only melancholy and despair, not madness or wandering of the mind, there can be little doubt that they are damned. In the case of those who are mad or weak minded, in whom the power of reason is loſt, they are assuredly saved, however they die, if they were in a ſtate of grace before the madness took them. Of the lay-brother mentioned above a wise man, who knew him well, said this in my hearing: "I do not think that he ever made an honeſt confession." For God, in His righteous judgment, may sometimes allow the juſt, who fear Him, to wander in their senses, yet He will not suffer them to end by so miserable a death. Here is an example.

CHAPTER XLV.

Of the monk Baldwin, formerly the advocate of Brunswick.

In Brunswick, a city of Saxony, there was a certain noble knight named Baldwin, who was advocate of the town. He, through the Holy Spirit left the world and took the habit in a house of our Order, called Rittershausen. For the whole year of his probation, he showed himself so scrupulous, that the abbot and the master of the novices often remonstrated with him. Further, when he became a monk, he was so full of fervour that the ordinary observances were not enough for him, and he added to them many special and private devotions. When the others ceased from labour, he still toiled, when the rest were sleeping, he still watched.

At length excessive vigils and labours affected his brain, and he incurred such violent headaches, that one night, before the convent arose for matins, he went into the church, climbed into the novices' bench, tied the bell rope round his neck and leapt down, and by the weight of his body set the bell ringing. The sacristan, alarmed, hurried into the church, and was terrified to see the monk hanging in such a fashion. None the less he ran up, and cut the cord, and laid down the quivering and almost strangled body, and brought him back to consciousness ; but though his life was restored, his reason never returned. It is said that he still lives, but takes no heed of when or what he eats, or of how long he sleeps. Thus sometimes the vice of accidie is born of indiscreet fervour.

Novice.—You said above that cowardice is also born of accidie or melancholy, but this does not seem to me to be a vice.

Monk.—*An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit* (Matt. vii. 18). Although cowardice may seem to be less evil than the other daughters of accidie, yet the temptation to it is very dangerous ; for it often turns back those who desire to be converted to a good life, and often hinders the converted in their progress.

Novice.—Give me an example.

Of Temptation

CHAPTER XLVI.

Of a Scholaſticus who carried out his year of probation in the Benedictine Order, because he was afraid of our Rule of silence.

Monk.—A Benedictine abbot, who is now a monk in our Order told me that a certain Parisian teacher, who wished to join us, was, by cowardice of mind, so terrified of the Rule of silence imposed upon our novices, that he entered the Benedictine Order, and there fulfilled his year of probation. As soon as he became a monk, he said to the convent, " I thank you, my maſters, for the kindness you have shown me, and I have fulfilled the purpose for which I came among you ; now with your permission I will go to the Ciſtercian Order. For I did not come here to ſtay permanently, but that I might, amongſt you, conquer the temptations which terrified me." Then he came to a house of our Order, and entered not as a novice, but as a full-fledged monk.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Of a prelate, who spoke of the Order as a temptation.

I remember a very learned man, who was bishop of a well known church. Not long ago, I asked him why he did not come to us, and why he was delaying so long, and he replied : " I do not dare to enter into temptation," calling the ſtrictness of our Order a temptation. For, long before, he had intended to join our Order, but had been prevented hitherto by cowardice. Whoso is too much afraid of being tempted in the Order, can scarcely be converted to the Order. I know many in the world, both clerks and lay-folk, who have long made their private vows, but nevertheless do not dare to be converted, through fear of temptations. They have always

the temptations before their eyes, but do not realise the manifold defences that the Order provides. Here is an example.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Of a knight who avoided the Order through fear of lice.

Daniel, the abbot of Schönau, told me that a certain knight, honourable and renowned in military service, had become a monk in Kamper Kloſt. He had a friend, another knight, equally renowned in arms, and one day when he was urging him to conversion, the other replied with a word of great cowardice: "Indeed, my friend, I would perhaps join the Order, if there were not one thing I am really afraid of." When the monk asked what that could be, the knight replied: "The lice that infeſt your robes"; for indeed the woollen cloth does harbour a quantity of vermin. The other rejoined with a smile: "Alack! what a valiant soldier! You, whom swords could not terrify when fighting for the devil, are you to be frightened by lice now that you are going to be a soldier of Chriſt? will you let vermin rob you of the Kingdom of God?" Although he made no reply to these words at the time, yet a little later he gave his answer in what he did; for, inſtigated both by the words and example of his friend, he entered the Order.

Soon afterwards it happened that these two friends met at Cologne in the church of the Blessed Peter. The monk of Kamper Kloſt greeted his friend in the usual way, and then added, smiling: "How goes it, brother? Are you ſtill afraid of the vermin?" The other, who had not forgotten the cause of this queſtion, smiled too, and made a good answer, an answer well worthy to be remembered: "Of one thing," he said, "you may be absolutely sure, my brother, that, if all the lice of all the monks in all the world were to concentrate upon my single body, they should not bite me out of the Order."

And when his friend heard this, he rejoiced greatly, and repeated the ſtory to many, that others also might be edified. You see how great bravery he gained, who before his conversion had been ſo pusillanimous. Whence could this come if not from the divine conſolations that are found in the Order? Let this be enough about those who are diſſuaded from the Order by the vice of cowardice; now liſten to examples of those, who after converſion have been tempted by this ſame vice, and hindered from ſpiritual progreſs.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Of the temptations of Godfrey, the Scholaſticus of Cologne.

Godfrey the ſcholaſticus of S. Andrew's in Cologne, came to the Order with great ſteadfaſtneſs and zeal, when he was already a man both old and infirm. We were novices together, and I both ſaw and heard how many and various were the temptations with which he was harasſed.

One day when he was in a hurry to go to church, and was trying to put on his caſſock, the devil interfered with him, and roughly dragged the caſſock back, again and again. At laſt, after a good deal of uſeleſs effort, he recogniſed that it was the devil who was hindering him; whereupon he ceaſed to pull at his caſſock, but put the enemy to flight with the ſign of the croſs and had no further trouble.

When he was now drawing near the end of his year of probation, the devil began to bring back to his mind all the various advantages he had enjoyed in the world, and alſo to put before him the many diſadvantages that ſeemed to await him in the Order, as for example, the heavy robes, the long vigils and ſilence, the heat in ſummer and the cold in winter, the repeated faſts and ſlender diet, and other ſuch things. Now when he thought of all theſe, he became ſo pusillanimous

that he despaired altogether of his ability to persevere ; and he said to me : " I did not know that the rule of the Order was so severe ; till now I had always thought that those who had been bled, ate flesh, and that the monks undressed to go to bed. I am sorry that I ever came hither ; and I have made up my mind to take into my own hands again the services of my church at Herlisheim, of which I am pastor, and which is now in unsatisfactory hands ; and I hope that, by the grace of God, I may be able to guide, honourably and peacefully, the people there committed to my charge."

I answered : " This is a temptation from the devil, who is trying to deceive you under an appearance of good." Then he said : " If this plan is not good, I will go back to my prebend, and choose for myself some room within the precincts of the cloisters where I may live so scrupulously that others may be edified by my example ; I will be at all the services, and I will give to the poor all that I can take from my own needs."

To which I replied : " This too is the advice of the devil. If you should go back, you will be a derision to all; and he who persuaded you, he it is who will drive you back into your former sins."

While he was thus wavering, one day I was sitting by his side, and trying to think how I might comfort him, when he snatched up the psalter, opened it and said : " Let us see what my brethren will say of me if I go back." The first verse that his eyes fell upon was this : *They who sat in the gate spake against me, and the drunkards made songs upon me.* And at once he cried out : " A true prophecy! See," he said, " I will expound this prophecy to you; if I go back to S. Andrew's, my brother canons, as often as they sit in the church porch will speak against me, passing their judgments upon me and disputing about my hopes of salvation; further at night, when they are sitting round the fire, and idly drinking, I shall be the subject of their song." And so by the mercy of God, he came back to his better mind, and was comforted, became a monk, and dying not long afterwards in a good contrition, departed to be with the Lord.

CHAPTER L.

Also of the temptations of Rener, his successor.

Rener succeeded Brother Godfrey as scholasticus of this same church of S. Andrew's; and after the death of the latter, became a novice among us, and began to be tormented by various temptations to such an extent that he became sorely troubled, and one day said to Dom Gevard the abbot: "I cannot stay here any longer, because I can no longer endure the Order." When the abbot asked him where he intended to go, he replied: "I must return to my prebend." Then the abbot, being a wise man, pretended great anger, and cried out as if to a servant: "Bring me an axe." And when the novice asked him what he wanted an axe for, he said: "That your feet may be cut off. For believe me, I would much rather keep you without your feet, than let you go away and bring shame upon our house." Then the other smiled and said: "Then I think I had better stay." And so this temptation, strong as it was, was driven away by a jest.

Novice.—According to my idea, this novice was easily tempted and easily cured.

Monk.—You will see this more fully in the following chapter.

CHAPTER LI.

Of a novice who when he had finished his year of probation refused to allow himself to be tonsured.

A certain novice in Hemmenrode had passed his year of probation quite tranquilly, and had expressed in the chapter-house his determination to remain steadfast. The day came when he was to be tonsured as a monk, and when he who was to shave him was stropping the razor at that moment, the devil so depressed the youth and filled him with cowardice, that he

changed his mind and would not suffer the razor to approach him. Dom Herman, the abbot of Marienſtatt, who was then our prior, seeing this, ran up with a sort of pretended jocularity, put both arms round the youth's neck, and telling him that this depression came from the inſtigation of the devil, quickly brought back his wavering mind to tranquillity. Moreover when the temptation was gone, the face of the youth grew calm, to the wonder of all present, and he allowed himself to be shorn. As the aforesaid monk told me, the face of the novice had been so suddenly changed, that the dark flush on his cheeks and the trembling of his lips showed very plainly the thoughts of his heart.

Novice.—This is another example of what I said, that with novices temptation comes lightly, and lightly goes.

Monk.—But there are temptations of novices so severe and ſtrong that neither words nor examples can reſtrain them, but only the power and comfort of God.

CHAPTER LII.

Of a novice tempted by the spirit of blasphemy, who was delivered in contemplating the crucifix.

A certain novice in the time of his probation was very grievously tormented by a temptation of the devil such as he had never experienced before his conversion. This temptation was concerning the Incarnation of the Word, not that he had heretical views upon the subject, but the devil ſtrove by the spirit of blasphemy to quench the fervour of his heart, so that while he was in doubt, he might refuse to endure the labours of the religious life for Chriſt's sake.

One day when at Prime he was ſtanding opposite the altar in the choir of the novices, he saw with his bodily eyes the image of the Crucified coming to him through the air, as if to say: "Why doſt thou doubt? Look upon Me. I am He,

who was born and suffered for thy sake." For some time the image remained suspended before his eyes, and all he could see of it was from the waist and upwards. When I asked him if he knew what this signified, he replied: "The Lord granted me this grace, that I might never be able to think of Him with any impure thought; and so I understood that He deigned to show me only the upper part of His body."

From that hour there ceased altogether that temptation which before no confession and no prayers could heal. But although this particular temptation ceased, the efforts of the tempter still continued; for when he found that he could not overthrow him by blasphemy, he tried to conquer him by accidie. For many days, when the time came to go to the church for the canonical hours, as soon as he reached the door of his cell, the devil weighed down his shoulders so strongly and heavily, that he was compelled to sit down again and rest. When he became a monk, he grew so vigorous and fervent in all the duties of the Order, that he knew no weariness, no matter with what kind of accidie he was assailed.

CHAPTER LIII.

Of the temptations of a novice, and how he was brought back to the right path by a nocturnal vision of two roads.

Philip, the abbot of Ottenburg, told our abbot of a very grievous temptation which beset one of his novices, and which was laid to rest only by the revelation of God. When the temptation was so sore that none could console him, and he had made up his mind to leave the monastery, on the very night before the day on which he had determined to return to the world, there came to him the following dream.

He seemed to be standing before a gate from which ran two roads, one on this side and one on that; one of them bent to

the right, and the other to the left ; but each led into a wood that lay opposite. While the novice was standing at the fork, and debating with himself which he should choose, he was aware of the presence of an old man at his side; to whom he said : " Good sir, if you know, will you tell me which of these two roads is the more direct, and gives the better travelling?" The other replied : " I will explain them to you fully and clearly : this road on the right, as it passes through the wood, is short indeed, but thorny, hilly, muddy and rough. Afterwards there follows a most delightful field, broad, level and gay, with every kind of flower. But the way on the left is, in its passage through the wood, flat, dry, broad, well trodden, and very pleasant, but it is not longer than the other. To it succeeds a field which is long, rocky, muddy and very rough, and even horrible to look upon. See, I have told you all; choose which you please." When he finished speaking, the novice awoke, not doubting that a vision had been granted him, since it exactly answered to his temptation.

Novice.—I should like to know the interpretation of this vision.

Monk.—The way on the right signifies the life monastic and spiritual, the way on the left the life worldly and carnal. The wood is this present life, in which, like trees, men grow old and die, Either life is equally short, whether it be monastic or secular. The first road is for the present thorny by the rigour of the Order, hilly by manifold temptations, miry by the humiliation of obedience, narrow by the restrictions of voluntary poverty. *Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life* (Matt. vii. 14), and that is represented by the right hand path. Further, the broad and pleasant field is Paradise, which it behoves us to *enter through much tribulation* (Acts xiv. 22). On the other hand, the worldly and carnal life, which is represented by the left hand path, because it leads those who walk upon it to judgment with the goats on the left hand side of Christ, is easy for the present owing to the satisfaction of the demands of the flesh, level by reason of prosperity, dry because of the unrestrained will, broad and well worn because many traverse it, delightful in the qualification of the lust of the eyes. In this fashion the novice interpreted the vision, and

was delivered from the temptation of apostasy owing to pusillanimity, and *from the stormy wind and tempest* (Ps. lv. 8).

Novice.—It is very marvellous that God should so effectively instruct the spirit of a sleeping man.

Monk.—I remember now another novice, grievously tempted in his waking hours, and delivered from that temptation with no less power by a vision of the night.

CHAPTER LIV.

Also of Gerard a novice in Aulne, who by an Alleluia heard in his sleep was delivered from temptation.

Aulne is a house of our Order in Flanders, which I spoke of in the sixth chapter of the first book. Here not many years ago, a certain noble knight, Gerard by name, of the town of Thuin, took the vows. When as a novice he used to stand in the novices' choir, and hear the voices of the monks singing in the upper choir over his head, he began to find a great temptation in this; and especially was his head troubled whenever they sang Alleluia, for then their voices were most loudly raised on a triumphant note. This so unnerved him, that he went to the prior and said: "Lord prior, I have great pains in my head, nor can I any longer endure so great a noise just over me." The prior offered words of consolation, but they profited him not at all.

One night when this temptation was specially troubling him, he saw himself in sleep hemmed in on all sides by certain knights who had formerly been his enemies, and there was no place of refuge left to him. And while he thought that he must quickly be captured or killed, he cried out to God, saying: "Lord, deliver me in this hour! And looking round, he saw immediately a white-robed army coming from far, and hastening to his aid. And the standard bearer who went

before, instead of sounding the usual military signal, cried over and over again with all his might, "Alleluia!" And at this cry the enemy were terrified and betook them hastily to flight, leaving the novice by himself alone.

Then he awoke, and rejoiced that he had been delivered, not only from the enemies of his dream, but also from a far worse danger, namely, the temptation we have spoken of. In the morning he went to the prior and said to him: "I beseech you, lord prior, that you sing Alleluia over my head more loudly and exultantly than ever, for now that cry of Divine praise can no longer disturb me," and he told him the whole vision. This was told us by Walter de Birbech, of sacred memory, who had both seen and known the said Gerard.

Novice.—Are not some monks also tempted by apostasy?

Monk.—Many are tempted, and manfully resist; others are tempted, and are altogether overcome both in will and deed; others again are tempted and though their will has consented, are called back before their actual fall by Divine revelations or by Divine ordering of events; while others again are saved by scourgings.

Novice.—Give me examples of these.

Monk.—It is not necessary to give you illustrations of the first or second, because these temptations are very common, but of the last two I will tell you what I have heard.

CHAPTER LV.

Of a monk in Ottenburg, who was delivered from the temptation to apostasy by a text.

A certan monk of Ottenburg, by the account of Dom Philip, his abbot, who told us the story, underwent such severe temptations that he made up his mind to return to the world. One night he was standing in the choir and pondering when and how he might leave the monastery, for very weariness he

could not join in the chanting. But at lauds, when they were singing the canticle of holy Habakkuk (for it was a Friday) the aforesaid abbot went round the brethren to ſtir them to further devotion. Now when he came to that wavering monk, who was not singing, the abbot, thinking him asleep, bent down towards him and shouted into his ear, though indeed he was wide awake, the verse that was then being sung, crying: *The devil shall go forth from before his feet* (Hab. iii. 5, vulg.). When he heard this, he was much terrified, thinking that the abbot, by some revelation, muſt know his perverse thoughts, to which the words of the prophet seemed so plainly to respond. And underſtanding the saying of the prophet only as meant for himself, he feared his curse, if he should go away and take the devil as guide for his journey. And so by the Divine power he was saved from his evil intention, and became eſtablished and settled in his vocation. Much did the abbot marvel when he heard the whole ſtory.

CHAPTER LVI.

Of a nun who was delivered from temptation by ſtriking her head againſt the door.

A certain nun told me herself that at the beginning of her conversion she was so sorely tempted, that she grieved that she had ever taken the vows. The devil brought back before the eyes of her mind the delights of the world which she had forsaken, and the poverty of the convent which she had to endure; and she began to be tempted by this and grievously depressed. Now when she could no longer endure these temptations, one night, forgetful of her vow, she rose from her bed, and attempted to leave the convent. She came to a certain door which led to the cemetery, where she intended to climb over the wall and so go back to the world. In God's providence it happened that she ſtruck her head so violently

againſt the upper lintel that she fell back with concussion of the brain and lay for a long time as one dead. At laſt, returning to her senses, she said to herself: "Whither then doſt thou desire to go, O unhappy one? What thou didſt owe to the devil, this thou haſt paid. Go back now to thy cell, for it is not the will of God that thou shouldſt ever depart."

You see how pitifully God protects His own, now by dreams, now by prophecy, and now by pain. From all this you may gather that novices as well as monks experience temptations which are not to be cured by human words or examples, but only by the Divine power.

Let this be enough of the temptations of accidie or depression. Would you like now to hear examples about avarice?

Novice.—I much desire it; for not only persons in the world, but even those in the cloiſter are ſtrongly tempted by this vice. Wherefore I beg you to define avarice for me, to enumerate her progeny, and then to add examples.

CHAPTER LVII.

Of avarice and her daughters.

Monk.—Avarice is an insatiable and unworthy desire for glory, or for anything else in the world. Love-of-money is a name also given to this vice, but a diſtinction should be made between the two names, because avarice is an immoderate craving for the possession of all kinds of things, while love-of-money is that which lets loose the particular appetite for amassing wealth.

Now the daughters of avarice are deceit, fraud, treachery, perjury, disquietude, violence, and the hardening of the heart againſt compassion. Avarice has two parts, namely, that of acquiring and that of keeping. *Of its evil influence Solomon speaks* (Prov. xv. 27). The Lord, wishing to show Zechariah the origin of the greateſt evils of the world, showed him an

ephah (Zech. v. 6, vulg.), by whose wide mouth he might understand cupidity. This vice by the same prophet is called *an eye over all the earth*. According to the apostle: *the love of money is the root of all evil* (1 Tim. vi. 10). Not only secular persons are tempted by it, but even spiritual. Laban followed after Jacob when returning to his native land, wishing to bring him back. When he could not persuade him, he said: *Though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou longest for thy father's house, yet why hast thou stolen my gods* (Gen. xxxi. 30). Jacob, whose name when interpreted means "striver" or "supplanter," signifies a monk, who ought to be a supplanter of vices. But Laban, which means "white," signifies the world.

It often happens that a man leaves the world through conversion, yet nevertheless, though converted, does not restrain his heart from avarice. After such a man the world rightly pursues, saying: *Thou hast a longing for thy father's house,* that is, the heavenly country, *why hast thou stolen my gods?* as if it said: why dost thou follow after avarice? They make idols of gold and silver, which even the religious eagerly seek after. Not then without cause does the apostle speak of covetousness as *idolatry* (Col. iii. 5). Rachel, which being interpreted is "one who sees God," is the soul of a religious which covets the riches of this world, and hides them *in the camel's furniture* (Gen. xxxi. 34), as she hid the idols. For all things necessary to the body, which the rule allows to monks, as they are common things, so they may be called *furniture*.

Novice.—Our own order has often been condemned by the world for avarice.

Monk.—What they call avarice, we call foresight. For we are bound by the injunction of our rule to receive all guests that come to us as though they were the Saviour Himself; and if we denied them hospitality, those who now condemn the Order for avarice, then would far more severely condemn us for hardness and lack of mercy. There is scarcely any house of the Order that is not burdened with debts because of guests and the poor, and also because of those who come daily to us for conversion, and cannot be rejected without scandal. For, to excuse our stewards not for everything, but for this much,

they are often compelled by this necessity, whether they will or no. With how much pain the vice of avarice is bound up both in this life and the next, and with how much glory and profit the contempt of riches is rewarded even in this present life I will show you by a few examples.

Great indeed will be its glory in the life to come.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Of a knight Cæsarius who refused to pay a debt to the canons of Bonn.

A knight named Cæsarius, who came from the neighbouring town of Königswinter, had a brother named Herminold, dean of Bonn cathedral, who lent him twenty marks of the money of Cologne from the funds of his church. On the death of the dean the knight refused to pay back the loan, and moreover went so far as to deny the debt altogether ; whereupon the provoſt and brethren, finding that he would not acknowledge it even in the presence of the original witnesses, summoned him to swear to his ſtatement before the judge. Then the knight, overmaſtered by avarice, took the oath and perjured himself, mounted his horse and rode away, but not so could he escape the hand of God. When he had completed the half of his journey home, having dismounted for some purpose, he found that he could not move. For because of his avarice, which is the root of all evil, the Lord had rooted faſt his feet to the ground, and because he had lied, deprived his tongue of its office. He, recognising that it was by the juſt judgment of God that he could neither speak nor go forward nor even return to Bonn, with much earneſtness lifted up his heart to the holy patriarch Abraham, who at that moment came into his thoughts, saying : " Holy Abraham, if by thy merits, I may recover my speech and power of movement, I will go back at once to Bonn, and reſtore their money to the brethren." No

sooner had he made this vow than both tongue and limbs resumed their functions; he returned, paid back the money, and did penance for his perjury. This story was told to our abbot by Cæsarius himself, a man indeed, simple-minded and obedient, who died as a novice in our house.

Novice.—If God so severely punish avarice in worldly persons, much more sharply will He, I think, punish it in the religious.

Monk.—That is very true; especially when the daughters of avarice are present, deceit, fraud and violence and the hardening of the heart against pity.

CHAPTER LIX.

Of a monastery which the Lord plagued because of the fraud of the cellarer.

A cellarer of our Order was tempted with avarice, and defrauded a certain widow woman. But the Lord, not unmindful of his wrongdoing, that same year so blasted the monastery's wine-crop that the wine had neither flavour nor colour. The abbot, sure that so great a plague must have its special cause, humbly besought a virgin of Christ named Aczelina, who was at that time at Cologne, that she would ask the Lord that the cause of that scourge might be revealed. When she had done this, the answer came to him that it was due to the fraud of his cellarer, which he had practised against such and such a widow; and the Lord added: "I will yet further smite him with a greater plague"; and so it fell out, for in that year a certain knight burnt nearly all the corn of the monastery in the barns; and then the plague ceased.

Novice.—Since God is very pitiful, how is it that He punishes a whole community for the sin of one man?

Monk.—We read in Joshua (Josh. vii.), that the wrath of the Lord was kindled against all the people because of the

avarice of Achan, who took the accursed thing from Jericho. For God is ſtern as well as pitiful; if for the sake of one man's merit, He often spares a multitude, why should you wonder, if in answer to the dictator of juſtice he sometimes punishes many for the fault of one?

Novice.—If these things be so, it seems to me useful for subordinates and necessary for superiors to warn frequently their officials that they commit no fraud againſt any one, leſt perchance they place a scourge in the hands of the Judge againſt themselves.

Monk.—You say well, because *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump* (1 Cor. v. 6). Not only does God punish, if through avarice we bring loss upon others, but also, if by greedily withholding our own property we do not share it with the poor, or if in hardness of heart we withdraw unnecessarily soon kindnesses we have been accuſtomed to show.

CHAPTER LX.

Of the plague of the monaſtery of Villers.

In Brabant there is a house of our Order called Villers, in which great kindnesses have often been shown, and are ſtill daily shown to gueſts and to the poor. This year there was some scarcity in that province, and the brethren of this convent made an eſtimate of their provision of corn; and being afraid of a deficit, as is the way of human weakness, they resolved (by the temptation of the devil, as afterwards became clear) to withhold, until the harveſt was gathered, the subsidy that they had always been accuſtomed to allot to the poor. A monk who came from that house told us that on that same night, the fishpond, which was beyond the monaſtery, burſt, and pouring itself through the various outbuildings, caused them great loss. Moreover, the brethren, as juſt and God-fearing men, putting it down to their sins and especially to the

avarice they had purposed to show to the poor, repealed their resolution, and assigned them the usual sums as before.

Novice.—I should like now to hear some examples of the punishment of avarice in the future life.

Monk.—This must be postponed till the twelfth book, in which we shall treat of the punishments and rewards of the dead. Meanwhile I will give you some examples against avarice, that you may know how much good and how much glory is theirs, who are tempted by avarice, and not overcome.

CHAPTER LXI.

Of an abbot who deposed his cellarer for fraud.

A certain Benedictine abbot, as was told me by an abbot of our Order, came to the abbot of Clairvaux and said: "Lord abbot, give me a sickle,[1] and I will give you in return a curved staff." He, understanding at once what he meant, received the man, clothed him in the Cistercian dress, and because he perceived him to be a man of prudence, not long afterwards appointed him abbot of a certain house of our Order.

At this time the brethren of that house were contending with some secular persons for certain possessions. The cause was brought before the judges, and a decision was given for the abbot and brethren. Later the cellarer said privately to the abbot: "My lord, we have done very well to-day, but I wish you to know that our cause was not altogether just." When he heard this the abbot was greatly troubled, but nevertheless made no reply. The next day he entered the chapter-house, bade the cellarer stand forth, and deposed him from his office, because in his avarice he had suppressed the truth.

Then he sent a messenger to his opponents and said: "Good sirs, let your property remain your own; from this day I will

[1] A sickle is used by Cæsarius in his Homilies as a symbol of a good and effective preacher, who gathers in souls and cuts away their vices.—J. Strange. n.

make no demand upon it." They went away rejoicing, but afterwards they were so struck with the abbot's singleness of mind and justice, that they came back quickly in compunction and in their gratitude freely conferred upon the monastery the property for which they had been fighting. The abbot at first refused to accept it, but they said: "Sir, whatever right in this property may be ours, we freely resign; and as far as it belongs to us, we offer it in alms to God." Then only did the abbot consent to take back his possessions, edifying his monastery far more by his simple justice than the cellarer had done by his astute avarice. You will hear an almost similar story about Dom Peter, the abbot of Clairvaux in the eleventh chapter of the sixth book.

Avarice is deeply abhorred by upright men, as you will hear in the following chapter.

CHAPTER LXII.

Of Ulrich, the provost of Steinveldt, and of an avaricious lay-brother whom he deposed.

A certain scholasticus lived at the monastery of S. Chrysanthus, a man of prudence and learning, a Frenchman named Ulrich. Since the income of his office was an insufficient one, he was unavoidably weighed down with debt. One of the brethren of the monastery of Steinveldt of the Premonstratensian Order, knowing him to be a man of great learning, frequently urged him to come to their convent and take the vows; and at length by divine inspiration he answered as follows: "I owe a little money; pay it for me, and I will come to you." When the provost of the said monastery heard this, he gladly paid the money, and the scholasticus forthwith assumed the monk's dress and soon afterwards was made the provost of that monastery, for at that time there were no abbots in the Premonstratensian Order.

He, realising that with this office he had undertaken to govern souls, not cattle or property, gave all his attention to rooting out vices, not to amassing money, well knowing that avarice is the root of all evils. Now he had a lay-brother so skilful and circumspect in the administration of their property, so energetic and accomplished as an organiser that everything passed through his hands, and he alone made every necessary provision for the monastery farms, whether in implements or stock or any other expenditure. It was he who managed everything, and neglected nothing, but added field to field and vineyard to vineyard. The provost considered all this, and reading in the scriptures that nothing was more criminal than avarice, sent one day for the lay-brother and said: "Do you know, my good fellow with a beard,[1] why I joined the Order?" He could not speak German well, and had no elegant phrases in that language, and so it was the habit of the lay-brothers to look upon all his speech as clumsy and awkward. The lay-brother replied: "No, sir, I do not know." Then he: "Well, I will tell you. I came here to bewail my sins in this place. Now, why did you come?" When the other replied: "Sir, for the same purpose"; the provost said: "If you came here to bewail your sins, you ought to behave like a penitent, that is, you ought to be continually in church, to watch, to fast, and to pray God unceasingly for your sins. For it is not the part of a penitent to do as you are doing, to despoil your neighbours, *to lade yourself with thick clay* (Hab. ii. 6).

To this the lay-brother replied: "Sir, these properties that I am buying are contiguous to the fields or vineyards of our church"; and the provost: "Very good. Since these have been bought, you must needs also buy those which lie next to them. You indeed put no bounds to your avarice. When all this province has been bought up by you, you will cross the Rhine at a stride, then you will go to the mountains, nor will you rest till you come to the sea. I think perhaps that you will stop there, because the sea is broad and great, and your stride is limited. Stay now in your monastery and frequent your church, that you may bemoan your sins by day and by night. Wait a little, and you will have enough earth beneath

[1] Lay-brothers wore beards, while monks were clean shaved. J. Strange.

you, above you and within you, for *dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return"* (Gen. iii. 19). Some of the elder brethren, when they heard of this, said: "Sir, sir, if this lay-brother be deposed, our house will come to ruin." To which he replied: "It is better for this house to perish than for an immortal soul," and would not listen to their petition.

Novice.—That was a true pastor who knew that the sheep committed to him had not been *redeemed with the corruptible things of silver and gold, but with the precious blood of a lamb without blemish and without spot* (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

Monk.—This was made clear both in his words and acts. It was at that time that Rheinhold became bishop of Cologne, and found that the revenues of the episcopate were much mortgaged, and its farms untenanted. Wherefore he was advised to seek out from the various houses of the Cistercian Order, in his diocese, faithful and far-sighted lay-brothers to look after the farms and restore the annual incomes by their industry. And when he agreed with this advice, and had collected several lay-brothers from the religious houses both of Kamper Klost and Berg, he was also advised to get the before mentioned lay-brother.

He sent therefore an honourable messenger for him, who when he had saluted the provost on behalf of the bishop, said: "My lord makes a small request to you, which I hope you will not refuse him." The provost answered: "It is not for my lord to make requests to me, but to give his commands"; and the other went on: "He begs most earnestly that you will send him such and such a lay-brother for such and such purposes." To this the provost replied humbly, firmly and courteously: "I have two hundred sheep in such a grange, and so many moreover in others, and likewise oxen and horses; let my lord take from them as many as he wishes; but I cannot for the purpose you speak of give him the lay-brother who has been committed to my conscience. I shall have to give an account to the chief Shepherd on the Day of Judgment not for sheep and oxen, but for the souls entrusted to me"; and he did not yield to him.

Further, he left another proof of his largeheartedness, a very useful example against the avarice of the religious. One

day before the aforesaid lay-brother had been removed from his office in the way we have described, the provoſt came to one of his granges and saw there a very beautiful young foal. He queſtioned the lay-brother about this animal, whose it was, and where it came from; and when the lay-brother replied: "A good and faithful friend of ours left him to us at his death"; said the provoſt: "Was it in devotion, or did the legacy come from some privilege?" The lay-brother answered: "It fell to us by his death; for the widow, because she is one of our tenants, offered him to us as a death duty." Then the provoſt, shaking his head, made this good answer: "Because the man was our good and faithful friend, is that the reason that you have robbed his widow? Give back her horse at once to the poor woman, for it is robbery either to take or to keep the property of another; it was not yours before the man's death."

Because this provoſt was a man of prudence, he was unwilling to take the younger men with him when he went abroad on the business of the monaſtery; for he realised that it was not right to expose them to the temptations of the devil. One day he did take with him one of the juniors, and as they rode along, talking of one thing and another, they met a comely girl. The provoſt, of set purpose, drew in his horse and saluted her kindly; and she ſtopped and returned his salute with a curtsey. When they have gone a little further the provoſt, wishing to make trial of the youth, said to him: "That seemed to me a very comely maiden"; and the other replied: "Indeed by lord, I thought so too." The provoſt went on: "'Tis pity she hath the defect of having only one eye." The youth answered: "Indeed, my lord, she hath two eyes, for I particularly noticed them." Very angry, the provoſt said: "And I will particularly notice your back! You ought to have been of such simplicity that you could not have told whether she was male or female." When he got back to the monaſtery, he said to the elder monks: "You, sirs, sometimes blame me because I do not take the juniors out with me," and he laid the whole case before them, and then severely upbraided and chaſtised the youth.

Also he was a man of such great learning, that once, when

he went to Citeaux on the business of his Order, he preached a sermon before the General Chapter, as I was told by one of the seniors of that house.

Novice.—It frequently happens that powerful men obtain from their subjects money or goods unjustly, and use this to build religious houses. Ought the religious wittingly to accept offerings of this kind?

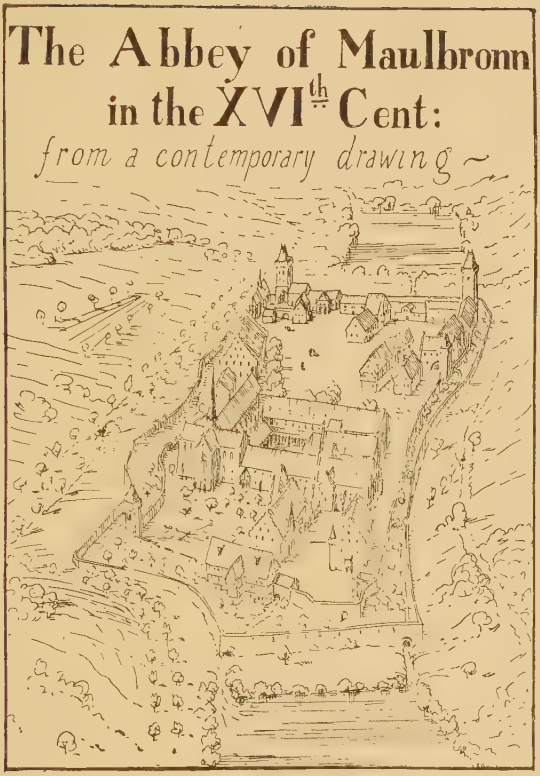
Monk.—Whatever injures the conscience pollutes it; but nevertheless you shall learn by the following example that sometimes this is done by the just decree of God.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Of the abbot to whom a voice came during prayer, while he was hesitating to accept a house built by a powerful noble.

A certain powerful noble determined to build a house for our Order upon his estates, and when he had found a suitable site, he ejected the inhabitants, partly indeed by giving them compensation, but partly also by threats. Now the abbot, who was to send a convent to this place, was afraid that it might be displeasing to God that the poor should be driven out from their homes in such a way; wherefore he prayed earnestly that God would deign to show him His will about this. Nor was that just man allowed to distress himself for long in this matter; for one day when he was engaged in prayer he heard a voice saying: *Thou hast given an heritage to those that fear Thy name* (Ps. lxi. 5). Rising from his knees, he at once understood by the prophet's words thus sent from heaven, that it was the Divine will that worldly-minded men should be ejected from their houses, and that the God-fearing should be settled there to praise His name in that place. Even so we read that the Lord gave to the children of Israel the lands of the Canaanites and of the other unclean races.

PLATE IV



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Yet such things are not to be held up for a precedent, because every kind of avarice and injuſtice ought to be abhorrent to the religious.

Novice.—All the more is scandal to be avoided in such cases, because worldly folk do not like to have the cloiſtered in their midſt.

CHAPTER LXIV.

What bishop Philip said when he was building our house.

Monk.—When our convent was invited to the mountain of Stromberg by archbishop Philip, some of the provincials remonſtrated with him because they were alarmed for their heirs. To these he made a good and worthy reply: "Would," he said, "that there were in every township of my diocese a convent of the juſt, who might praise God continually, and pray for me and for those committed to my charge! So, I think, the condition of my province would be much better than it now is, for they would harm none, and would profit many. Never do they lay hands upon the goods of others, while they share their own with all.

CHAPTER LXV.

Of the generosity shown to the poor in the great famine by the house of Peterſthal.

At the time when the great famine, which took place in the year of our Lord's Incarnation eleven hundred and ninety

seven, was brooding over the land and destroying great multitudes, our house came to the help of many, although at that time it was both poor and newly founded. Those, who had the opportunity of estimating the number of the poor who beset the gate, said that sometimes relief was given to fifteen hundred in one day. Dom Gevard, who was then abbot, gave orders that daily, until harvest a whole ox should be cooked in three great cauldrons with vegetables collected from all sides, and he himself distributed it, with a portion of bread, to the poor one by one ; and the same thing was done with sheep and other foodstuffs.

And so by the grace of God, all the poor survived and were supported until the harvest. And as I heard from the lips of abbot Gevard himself, when he feared that perchance the supply of grain might give out before the time, and upbraided the baker for making the loaves too large, the latter replied : " Believe me, my lord, they are very small in the dough, but they grow in the oven ; we put them in small, but they came out large." The same baker, to wit, the brother Red Conrad, who is still living, told me that not only did the loaves grow in the oven, but also the flour increased in the sacks and vessels, so that all the bakers marvelled as well as the poor who came for their food. For they said : " Lord God, whence comes all this grain? " That year the Lord of all wealth rewarded the charity of His servants a hundredfold even in this life. For Master Andrew of Speyer, with the money he had collected at the court of the Emperor Frederick and also in Greece, bought a great farm in Plittersdorf, and gave it to us. From whence could come such a will, except from God?

CHAPTER LXVI.

Also of the humanity which the house of Hemmenrode showed at the same time to the poor, and how it received much more back from God.

At the same time our mother-house in Hemmenrode showed no less charity to the poor ; indeed it was greater, as the house is richer. So grievous was the famine that oppressed the poor, that pregnant women fulfilled their time for giving birth in the wood before the gate, while they waited for relief. But the Lord is not unmindful of His promise : *Give, and it shall be given unto you* (Luke vi. 38), and because they were generous in giving, He sent them generous rewards. For Gerard, the provost of S. Simeon in Trèves, left them at his death about six hundred pounds of silver, out of which he earmarked one hundred for the use of the poor at the gate. When the porter received his hundred pounds, he bought with it no vineyards or fields, but many bushels of fine wheat-flour from Coblentz, which enabled him to support the poor adequately until the harvest.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Also of a monastery in Westphalia, to whom God restored two fold the money given to the poor.

Brother Gotteschalk of Volmunstein, our fellow monk, told me that after those times of scarcity, a certain cellarer of our Order from Westphalia met him. And when he asked him whither he was hurrying, he replied: " To the Exchange. Before the harvest, owing to the necessities of the poor, we killed our cattle and pledged our chalices and books. But God sent us a friend, who gave us so much gold, that the quantity was double all that we had given away.

Wherefore I am going to change this into silver that with it I may redeem our pledges and buy back our flocks." Let these three examples be our answer to those who accuse the monasteries of avarice.

Novice.—Never before did I understand so well what that meant: *Give, and it shall be given unto you.*

Monk.—Nor will you understand perfectly until the future life, when in return for any earthly goods you have renounced for Christ's sake, or have given to the poor in His Name, you will receive the kingdom which has been *prepared* for the elect *from the foundation of the world* (Matt. xxv. 34). In that day the Son of man will recount your gift to you with the rest of the elect, and you will receive His promise (Matt. xxv. 35). Nevertheless, just men, made perfect, will sit with the Lord in judgment.

Novice.—If such mighty benefits wait upon alms-giving, woe unto them who in this short life follow after avarice!

Monk.—Those words of the Lord, *Give, and it shall be given unto you,* recall to my memory a story very necessary as an example for those who exercise hospitality.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Of a monastery which came to poverty through the avarice of an abbot, and was restored by the reception of the brethren Date and Dabitur.

A certain abbot, a Benedictine I think, as I understood from the account given by an abbot of our Order, was very hospitable and exceedingly pitiful towards the poor. And because he was eager in works of mercy, he desired to appoint such stewards of his house as would not hinder his zeal, but rather inflame it. The more guests he received, the more charity he showed to the poor, the more did the Lord bless him and his house.

After his death, his successor, urged by avarice, removed from office those who had distributed mercy, and appointed others whom he knew to be more grasping, and said: "My predecessor was too lavish and indiscreet, and his stewards too wasteful. We ought so to order and restrict the expenses of our convent, that if perchance our crops should be ruined with hail, and bad times should come, we shall still have enough to help the poor." Screening his avarice with words like these, he altogether put an end to hospitality, and withdrew the accustomed benefits from the poor. With the departure of charity, the resources of the convent could no longer prosper, and indeed quickly came to such a degree of poverty that the Brethren had scarce enough to eat.

One day there came to the gate a venerable white-haired man, who asked for admission. The porter took him in secretly and fearfully and showed him the kindness due to a guest so far as he could, and added: "You must not be offended, good sir, that I provide for you so ill, because necessity is the cause of it. In former days I have seen this monastery in such prosperity that if a bishop should have come at any time, he would have received a hearty and lavish welcome." The other replied: "Two brethren have been driven out from this convent; and never can it flourish again, unless these brethren return. Their names are brothers Date and Dabitur"; and then he vanished. I think that he must have been some angelic personage, by whose agency the Lord desired to recall the Brethren to their former charity. The porter who was a lay-brother, remembered the names without understanding them, and repeated to the abbot and brethren all that he had heard. Hospitality was renewed, and at once the Lord began to bless them as before.

Novice.—What are we to think of those who give alms and receive guests only for the sake of vainglory?

Monk.—Such men give in a hopelessly wrong way, and receive no reward except human praise which is indeed the reward they seek. Some give their substance to Christ only for the sake of eternal life, and these the Lord does not leave unrewarded even here and now. Some indeed do it for both motives, namely that they may grow rich in this present life,

and in the future have life eternal ; and these the Lord often rewards with the double gift, in this world temporal riches, and in the world to come life everlasting. Some however in their poverty, bestow all they have upon Christ, and when they find themselves enriched by Him, then are they the more tempted by the devil, and close their hands through fear of returning to poverty.

Novice.—Give me an example of this.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Of a woman who became rich after showing hospitality to the abbots of the Cistercian Order, and poor again when she withdrew this.

Not long ago a woman, still perhaps alive, who lived in a certain city, where our abbots were wont to lodge on their way to the General Chapter, received several of them for the sake of gain. When she perceived that their coming brought a blessing to her, she gave them first their lodging and then their food, for nothing. The more she gave, the more she found she had ; and when she had now become rich by the merits and prayers of her guests and abounded in all her possessions, she began to fear poverty again, and said to herself : " You cannot any longer sustain such heavy expenses ; be more careful now, lest you come to poverty." Wonderful result ! As soon as she refused to give the accustomed hospitality to her guests, the Lord also withdrew His bounty from her. For in that house Brother Dabitur could not dwell when his Brother Date was driven out of it. At length coming back to herself and seeing that she was coming to want, she did penance for her fault, and resuming her former good works, began once more to grow rich.

CHAPTER LXX.

How that saying ought to be understood, To him that hath shall be given ; and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath.

Novice.—I should like to know how we ought to understand those words of Christ (Matt. xiii. 12): *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance ; but whosover hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*

Monk.—To him that has the grace of hospitality, and receives his guests with kindness, goodwill and a cheerful countenance, and who freely welcomes God's poor ; to him it is the Lord's will that there shall be given as much, and sometimes as is shown above, a hundredfold in this present life, and he shall have abundance, and in the world to come life everlasting. But he who has not the grace of almsgiving and hospitality, he who has no true welcome for his guests, and is reluctant to look upon the faces of the poor ; he who gives them grudgingly just as much as he cannot refuse, from this man, by God's just decree, that which he possesses in temporal wealth, either fails of itself, or is taken away and carried off by others, nor is it increased by the offerings of the faithful.

Novice.—This explanation pleases me much, especially in the light of the preceding examples.

Monk.—Though it is a common occurrence that generous monasteries are enriched by Christ, and on the other hand those that are grasping, contrary to His will, are impoverished, nevertheless I will add an example of each.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Of the hospitality of the monks of Laach.

In Mayenfeld, in the province of the diocese of Trèves, is situated a Benedictine abbey called Laach, taking its name from its position, remarkable for its notable men and great possessions. Thither one day came a certain Saxon to ask hospitality, and was received very charitably and went away much edified. Not long afterwards, a rich friend of this man in Saxony was at the point of death, and, while making his will in the other's presence, said: "I should like to leave something for the benefit of my soul, if I knew where it could best be placed." His friend replied: "Near Cologne there is a very holy monastery, wherein dwell real men of God, who are remarkable for their hospitality, as I myself can testify. Nowhere could you place your alms better nor more profitably to your soul than there." According to his advice, the Saxon bequeathed, I think, forty marks of silver to this convent, and died. The money was sent by a servant to Cologne, and because that diocese was much disturbed owing to the war then raging between the kings Otto and Philip, he left the money there, and going to Laach on foot, told the whole matter to the abbot, who sent his cellarer and received the money. This was told me by a certain lay-brother of our Order.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Of an inhospitable Provost of the Benedictines.

There is a cell of the same Order situated in the Bishopric of Cologne, but I do not wish to name it at present, and this cell the provost ruled so grudgingly that, in spite of the Rule, he would not willingly receive any guests to hospitality, although he had abundance of wealth. But the bishop, who

was also the patron of that cell, knowing both the inhospitality and the wealth of this man, came to visit him once or twice a year with a large number of mounted attendants and a great body of soldiers, so that the provoſt spent as much in their entertainment as would have ſufficed for the ordinary hospitality of a whole year. For though the bishop spared other much richer houses, yet he spent lavishly the goods of this provoſt, that the before-quoted saying of the Saviour might be fulfilled.

Novice.—I admit that enough has been said both in teaching and illuſtrations againſt avarice ; and I pray you now that you will not find it irksome to do the same againſt gluttony.

Monk.—Firſt I muſt explain to you about gluttony. What it is, and who are its daughters, and how dangerous is the temptation of it both to the body and soul of any who consent to it ; and then I will try and make these things plain to you by examples.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Of gluttony and her daughters.

Gluttony is the immoderate and enticing appetite of eating and drinking for bodily pleasure alone. Its daughters are uncleanness, scurrility, foolish jeſting, excessive talking, dullness of intelligence. In gluttony there are five ſtages of sin. The firſt is to demand rare and delicate food ; the second to prepare food in a fanciful way ; the third to eat before the time ; the fourth to eat greedily ; and the fifth in too great quantity. The firſt man fell a victim to gluttony in Paradise ; it was this that deprived Esau of his birthright ; gluttony incited the men of Sodom to the worſt kind of sin ; it laid low the children of Israel in the desert (Ps. lxxviii. 31). The sin of Sodom was satiety and *fulness of bread* (Ez. xvi. 49).

Abdo, the man of God, when sent to Bethel, was slain by a lion, owing to gluttony (1 Kings xiii.) ; the rich man, who *fared sumptuously every day* found burial in hell (Luke xvi. 22) Nebuzar-adan (2 Kings xxv. 8), the chief cook, that is, gluttony, deſtroyed Jerusalem. You see how great dangers lie in this vice. (Also, Eccles x. 16, vi. 7, Lk. xi. 34, Rom. xiii. 13). The firſt temptation of Chriſt (Matt. iv.) by the devil was through gluttony ; wherefore Jerome says : " in the fight Chriſt firſt ſtrove by faſting againſt gluttony, by which the firſt man had been conquered." How ſtrong and importunate againſt us this vice can be, I will explain by some recent examples ; and I will try to keep the order, as far as I can, and also the manner of these temptations of Adam, Esau and the reſt, which have been enumerated above.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Of the scholar Conrad, who, for the eating of one apple, loſt his uncle's favour.

The dean of the Cathedral of Cologne was a Swabian by birth, a rich, honourable and prudent man, and acceptable as a counsellor to the Emperor Frederick. This man had planted in his orchard a young apple tree of a new kind, and already its bloom was developing into fruit ; he was very anxious to teſt its firſt produce, and so had given orders to all his household, that no one should touch any of the few apples on the young tree before maturity, under penalty of his displeasure and of punishment. Every one else obeyed this order, but a certain scholar named Conrad, his nephew, who by his influence had been promoted to be a canon in the church of S. Andrew saw this fruit and luſted after it ; and disregarding his uncle's order, plucked—one only I think—of the apples and ate it. Now when the dean heard of this, he was inflamed againſt him with so much anger and resentment,

that he cast out this once beloved nephew, and could not be induced by any entreaties to pardon his fault ; further, from that day he used all his influence against him, though formerly he had been most eager for his advancement. I knew that Conrad well, and he reached no higher dignity than the office of precentor of the church of S. Andrew. You see how closely the punishment of this lad corresponded with that of Adam. The one was cast out of the delights of paradise, and the other from his uncle's house and wealth, and both for the sake of an apple.

Novice.—Seeing that Adam had under his hand all the fruits of Paradise, it seems wonderful to me that he could not leave one tree alone.

Monk.—There are many who rashly condemn Adam for his disobedience, because they look only upon the worthlessness of the apple, and forget the violence of the temptation, as will be shown in the next example.

CHAPTER LXXV.

Of a servant who opened a box against his lord's command.

A certain householder had a servant, who was a faithful and wise steward of all his property. It happened that one day a discussion arose between them upon the disobedience of Adam, in eating the apple against the Lord's command ; and the servant cried out upon his inconstancy, saying : " To say nothing of God, I am sure that if you had laid upon me as strict an injunction, I could not have disobeyed it." His master said nothing at the time, but later, when the man was less upon his guard, and had forgotten his diatribe against Adam, he handed to him a box, closed yet not fastened, and said : "I entrust this box to your keeping ; if you should open it, you will lose the reward of all your labour, and forfeit my

favour for ever." He impressed this upon him several times, and the man withdrew into his private room, taking the box with him.

Here a strange tide of contradictory thoughts began at once to come over him, and he was beset with a longing to know what the box contained. Often he turned the box this way and that, and looked at it from every side ; then he said to himself : " Supposing I open it. I am alone ; there is no one to see. If I am asked, I will deny it ; there is no witness to convict me." Overcome at last by temptation, he opened the box ; whereupon a little bird, that had been shut up in it, flew away. Then indeed, overwhelmed with remorse, he knew the mystery, and knew too the trap into which he had fallen ; and when his lord asked for the box, he threw himself at his feet and sought pardon, but found it not. And his master said : " Thou wicked and perverse servant, in blaming our first parent for disobedience, and in commending to me thine own steadfastness, thou hast condemned thyself out of thine own mouth. Depart from me ; thou shalt see my face no more." This story was told me by a canon of S. Severin in Cologne, a man of advanced years, of strict veracity and of religious life. A somewhat similar occurrence took place in Saxony.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Of a knight's lady, who, overcome by temptation, entered a slough which her husband had forbidden.

Henry of Wied was a rich powerful and well-known knight, attendant on Henry, duke of Saxony. There are many still living who know him who perchance remember the story I am about to tell. His wife was a lady of noble birth and very dear to him ; one day when they were talking together about the sin of Eve, she began, as is the way with

women, to speak harshly of her, and to condemn her for her inconstancy, because for the sake of an insignificant apple, merely to satisfy her gluttony, she had subjected the whole human race to so great penalties and miseries. But her husband said: "Do not condemn her; possibly under a similar temptation you might have done the same. See now, I will lay upon you a command still easier than hers, and for all your love for me you will not be able to keep it." When she asked what this command might be, the knight went on: "It is this, that on the days that you go to your bath, you will not go with bare feet into the slough in our courtyard; on the other days you may go in if you like." She laughed and shuddered at the thought of transgressing such a command, for that pond was foul and evil-smelling, and collected the filth of the whole yard; and Henry went on: "I am going to add a penalty; if you shall obey me, you shall have from me forty marks of silver, but if not, you shall pay me the same sum"; and she was well pleased with the bargain. Then without her knowledge, he told some of his servants to keep a watch upon the pond.

Strange to say, from that hour this honourable and modest matron could never cross the court without a furtive glance at the pond; and whenever she went to her bath, she was always grievously tempted by the sight of this water. One day, when she came out of the bath, she said to her maid: "Unless I go into that pond, I shall simply die." Presently, after the attendant had gone, she looked carefully round, and seeing no one, girt up her robe, and went forthwith into that filthy water up to her knees, walking to and fro in it, this way and that, until she had satisfied her longing. This was immediately reported to her husband, and he, much pleased, said, as soon as he saw her: "How now, lady? have you had a good bath to-day?" and when she replied: "Yes, thank you," he added: "Did you take it in the bath, or in the pond?"

At this she was filled with confusion and remained silent, perceiving clearly that he was not ignorant of her folly. And he: "What, my lady, has become of your constancy, your obedience, your boasting? You were tempted much less

urgently than Eve, you have resisted less bravely, you have fallen more disgracefully ; pay therefore what you owe." And since she had no money with which to pay, he took all her costly clothes and gave them to different people, permitting her to be thoroughly miserable for some time.

Novice.—It is a very deplorable thing that human nature should thus always strive after what is forbidden.

Monk.—How violent sometimes may be conflict with temptation after a command I will show you by the example of a certain knight, who chose rather to die than be conquered by his temptation.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Of a penitent knight who was slain but not overcome by the temptation of a forbidden tree.

I have been told by a certain monk of a knight who had committed many crimes, how his heart was at last turned to penitence. He went to the priest, made confession of his sins, and promised satisfaction, but was unable to keep his promise. Now when he had acted thus several times, one day the priest said to him : " We are making no progress. Tell me now, is there any promise that you really can keep in satisfaction for your sins? " The knight replied : " There is an apple tree on my property, whose fruit is so evil and bitter, that I can never eat of it. If you think well, let it be my penance never to taste of those apples so long as I live." The priest, knowing how temptation arises from the incitements of the flesh and the devil or both, especially after a prohibition, replied : " For all your sins, I lay this command upon you, that you shall never willingly eat of the fruit of that tree."

The knight went away, looking upon the penance enjoined as a mere nothing. This tree grew in such a place, that as often as he went in or out of his courtyard, it met his eyes ;

and whenever he saw it, he remembered the prohibition, and in the remembrance was soon grievously tempted. One day when he was passing before it, he looked upon its apples, and he who tempted and laid low the first man through the lure of forbidden fruit, tempted him with such insistence, that he went up to the tree, and now stretching out his hand to the apples, and now drawing it back again, he passed nearly the whole day in these contending struggles. At last by the help of grace, he triumphed and resisted the desire, but with so great effort that his heart was broken, and he lay down beneath the tree and gave up the ghost.

Novice.—No wonder that Adam fell if his temptation were as great as that.

Monk.—Adam's fall in yielding to temptation was grievous because, although he had an outside cause to drive him on, yet he also had an inward grace to help him. But let this be enough in the matter of the apple through which our first parents were driven out of Paradise.

Novice.—No less do I wonder that Esau in his hunger threw away his birthright before God, for the sake of a mess of pottage, than that those, who were disobedient concerning the apple, were driven out of Paradise.

Monk.—Not through hunger, not through lust of the pottage, did he lose his birthright, but for the contempt with which, at the call of gluttony, he sold so precious a possession for so unworthy a price. Yet we, who frequently feed upon such food and heartily enjoy it, need not find any cause of alarm in this pleasure, for it is a great gift of God, when those who before their conversion were fastidious in their food, find that simple vegetables bring them as good an appetite as a costly banquet.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Of the three grains with which abbot Gisilbert said that he spiced the pottage of the monks.

At the time when those honourable knights of so much renown in the world, to wit, Ulrich, surnamed Flasse, Gerard called Wascart, and Charles Markman of Cologne with other rich men both clergy and laity had been converted in Hemmenrode, and had grown strong in the Order, a man still in the world, a friend and acquaintance of these knights, said to their abbot Gisilbert of blessed memory: "It is a source of continual wonder to me that men, so delicately brought up in the world, can live upon simple vegetables, pease and lentils."

The abbot replied: "I give them three grains of spice, with which they flavour their rough messes so effectively that they scarce leave anything on their plates at meals." While the other was wondering what he meant, the abbot continued: "I will explain. The first grain of spice signifies the long night watches, the second manual labour, and the third the impossibility of getting any better food. Here you have the three spices which, when applied to our pottage, give it the finest flavour in the world and I firmly believe that when a monk avoids his pease or lentils from melancholy fancies or humours, he commits a greater sin than when he eats too much. If he is not willing to take what is set before him, obviously he needs or desires richer food; and if such were given him habitually, we should scandalise the weak, while if it were withheld, he would grow old and feeble before his time. A monk cannot fast well, watch well or pray well on an empty stomach. This is why S. Bernard in one of his sermons reproves so sharply monks who are dainty. Our food is not very strengthening, and therefore we must eat plenty of it."

Novice.—What are we to think of those who have to go frequently into the world on business and fare delicately nearly every day? Are they equal in merit to their brethren, who have to be content with the regular food?

Monk.—It is not for me to judge them. Each one will receive according to his work ; but I will tell you a very pleasant discourse about this, spoken by a lay-brother in jeſt againſt a certain Cardinal.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Of the discourse of an illiterate monk to Henry, Cardinal of Alba.

The Cardinal bishop of Alba, Henry of sacred memory, in the year of our Lord 1188, in the time of the Emperor Frederick, was sent to Germany by Pope Clement, to preach the cross againſt the Saracens, and took with him as companions of his journey some monks of the Ciſtercian Order from our part of the country.

One day as they rode together, he said to them : " Which of you will tell us something that may profit us? " And one of them answered : " That one," pointing to a certain lay-brother whose name I have forgotten. Whereupon the Cardinal ordered him at once to preach them a word of exhortation. At firſt he excused himself, saying that a lay-brother ought to hold his peace in the presence of learned men ; but at length he began as follows : " When we shall be dead and carried to paradise, our holy father Benedict will come to meet us. When he sees that we are all monks wearing the cowl, he will bring us in joyfully ; but when he sees Henry the Cardinal bishop he will be astonished at his mitre, and will say, " But who are you? " and he will reply : " Father, I am a Ciſtercian monk. " The saint will answer : " Certainly not ; no monk ever wore a mitre." And when Henry shall proteſt loudly on his own behalf, the holy Benedict, having at length passed his decision, will say to the doorkeepers : " Put him on his back and cut open his stomach. If you find in it simply vegetables, beans, pease, lentils, pulse and the

regular food of monks, let him come in with the others ; but if not, if you find great fish, and worldly and delicate dainties, why, then, let him stop outside." Then he turned to the Cardinal and added : " And what will you say then, my poor Henry? " The Cardinal smiled at this question, and commended his discourse.

When I was still a boy, I heard this venerable bishop and monk preaching the cross in the church of S. Peter at Cologne, and I saw him there giving the cross to many ; he was a just and holy man, one who *shook his hand from the holding of bribes* (Isa. xxxiii. 15), and who edified many both in word and example.

Novice.—I remember that you told us above that the iniquity of Sodom sprang from fulness of bread and abundance.

Monk.—They are the words of the prophet Ezekiel (Ez. xvi. 49). Moses says : *Before the Lord destroyed Sodom, all that region was well watered everywhere, even as the garden of the Lord, and like the land of Egypt* (Gen. xiii. 10) ; for it was of exceeding fertility. It was because the Sodomites had given themselves over to feastings that they broke out into excess, for gluttony is ever an extreme provoker of luxury.

Novice.—What then? is it dangerous for a monk to satisfy himself with bread?

Monk.—What I said above of lentils, I say now of bread. In the bread of the Sodomites we must understand the superfluity of all kinds of foods in which they abounded. But our bread, which is both black and coarse is a thing of necessity rather than superfluity, and I think if a monk shrinks from it or requires it to be more tasty, he sins more deeply than if he satisfies himself with it. Sometimes there may be an extreme temptation even in such a matter as bread.

CHAPTER LXXX.

Of a clerk to whom Christ offered a piece of barley bread that had been dipped in His own side.

Some time ago there came to Clairvaux for conversion, a clerk who had lived very delicately in the world. He shrank with disgust from the convent bread, which at that time was very coarse, and from the pease, and was wasting away with fear not merely of hunger, but of the food he would have to eat in the future. One night the Saviour appeared to him in a vision, holding in His hand a piece of the bread which was the regular food of the Brethren, and held it out to him, bidding him eat. The novice replied: "Lord, I cannot eat barley bread." Whereupon Christ dipped the same piece of bread in the wound in His side, and again offered it to him; and when he had tasted, it became sweeter than honey in his mouth. From that time, he ate with great appetite both the bread and the other regular food, which hitherto he had scarce been able to touch. Understand from this, how the devil tries by capricious and undue abstinence to overcome those whom he cannot ensnare with gluttony.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

Of a novice, whom the devil deceived by offering him the appearance of half a loaf.

As our elder brethren are wont to tell, a demon appeared in Hemmenrode under the form of an angel, and for several days in succession showed to a certain not very wise monk the appearance of half a loaf upon the table, and persuaded him not to take more than that. The monk followed the suggestion of the demon, and after a short time he became so weak of body that his senses failed him and he died.

Novice.—You said above that gluttony laid low the children of Israel in the desert. What kind of gluttony do you think to have been the chief cause of that plague?

Monk.—The longing for flesh. For when the Lord had given them manna, the bread of angels, *able to content every man's delight and agreeing to every taſte* (Wisd. xvi. 20), they were ungrateful for so great a mercy, and murmured against Moses (Num. xi. 4-6, xxi. 5). You see how great was their ingratitude, and with what rebellion it was accompanied? The punishment which swiftly followed exposed their guilt (Num. xi. 33). Often does the devil tempt the Religious with flesh, sometimes asleep, sometimes awake, now visibly and now invisibly. Some he conquers and by others he is overcome.

Novice.—May I hear examples of this?

Monk.—I will give you some that are not only apposite but also true in fact.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Of the monk Arnold to whom when sleeping in the choir the devil offered flesh.

Not long ago there died among us a monk named Arnold who had been a canon in the church of the Holy Apoſtles at Cologne. Before his conversion he had been a rich man and one was who was very dainty in his food. He used to tell me that the devil had sorely tempted him through gluttony, especially when he allowed himself to fall asleep in church. Sometimes, when ſtanding in the choir, if he closed his eyes in fatigue, he perceived a dish full of meat before his mouth from which, as it seemed to him, he ate like a dog. And it sometimes happened that being filled with shame to realise that he was eating in such beſtial fashion, he drew back his head and ſtruck it sharply againſt the wall.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

Of a lay-brother who went to sleep at mass, and gnawed wood thinking it to be flesh.

A certain lay-brother, as I heard from his own lips, was attending one day a private mass, and went to sleep during the canon. While he slept, he began to gnaw with his teeth the wood on which he was lying prostrate, the devil making him think that he was chewing flesh ; and the grinding of his teeth was as the sound of a mouse breaking through the shell of a nut. Brother Richwin, our cellarer, who was present at that mass, heard it, and it interfered with his prayers ; and when he was able to speak with the lay-brother, he asked him what he had between his teeth at mass, saying : " I could not pray because of the noise you were making." The other replied : " Believe me, I was eating good flesh." " Where did you get it from? " he asked ; and the lay-brother answered : " The devil prepared it during the canon, and thrust a dish piled up with meat under my nose. If you do not believe me, look at the wood where I was lying and you will find in it the marks of my teeth ; " and he went on to tell him how the devil had mocked him while he slept. Indeed the wood was found to have been gnawed by his teeth. Thus the enemy tries to deceive in sleep those Religious whom he cannot entrap with gluttony when awake.

Hear now about a virgin whom he tempted with meat not when asleep, but when awake and open-eyed, but yet did not prevail.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

Of a fasting virgin, to whom the devil offered a goose.

There was a virgin of Nivelle who, for the love of Christ, left her relations and her father's house to live with some

nuns of that province, with whom she supported herself with the work of her own hands, and spent all her spare time in prayer and fasting. Filled with envy of her virtues, the devil carried off a goose from her father's house, and placed it on the bench where she was sitting with the other women, saying: "Why, unhappy one, do you torture yourself with hunger? take this and eat." When she answered: "I may not eat of it, because it is a theft," the devil replied: "Certainly not, for I took it from your father's house." Then the maiden: "You cannot deny that it is a theft. Take away the goose at once, and put it back where you took it from." He, seeing that he could gain no advantage over her, picked up the goose in sight of all the nuns, and carried it back to the shed from which he had stolen it. Her father's household bore witness that they had heard a great noise and clamour among the rest of the geese, both when he carried off the bird, and when he restored it to its place.

I will give you two more examples, by which you may understand how the devil terrifies and puts men to confusion that he may overcome them by a longing for flesh.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

Of a lay-brother who ate flesh in the cellar.

I was told by a monk I knew about a lay-brother who was tempted and overcome by a longing for flesh; he was ashamed to ask for it, and knew of course that it was unlawful; and so one day he prepared a mess of it for himself, and went into the cellar and ate it; for he was a cellarer of the Premonstratensian Order. By the permission of God, the devil, since he could do no more, carried off the glutton, and hung him, like a garment, upon the roof of the belfry. While he clung there, or rather was supported by the devil, to whom power had been given rather to frighten than to kill him, he cried

out luſtily, imploring his brethren's help. They saw him clinging to the roof, and not knowing why, were exceedingly aſtonished, and with all haſte they climbed the tower and cut through the tiles, and so rescued him through the hole thus made.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

Of a hen, whose entrails were changed into a toad.

Not long ago, some of the monks of Prüm were dining together on Shrove Tuesday in the house of a secular prieſt, and they feaſted on various meats and coſtly wines almoſt till midnight. Now when they had eaten their fill, near cockcrow the prieſt called to him a grown-up scholar named John, who was well known to me, and said: "Moſt assuredly we will ſtill have something more to eat; go and bring the hen which you will find on the perch next the cock (she is usually fatter than all the reſt) and prepare her for us." When the scholar had wrung her neck, cut her open and put in his hand to take out the entrails, he drew out inſtead an enormous toad. Now when he felt it move in his hand, and threw it away, and saw what it was, he uttered a loud cry of fear, that brought all the others out. When they saw that the hen's entrails had been changed into a toad, the gueſts hurried away in alarm and confusion, for they recognised that it was the work of the devil. This was told me by one of the brethren who was present and saw the marvel.

Novice.—I find fish a greater temptation to me than flesh, because I may eat the former, and not the latter.

Monk.—I think you are like the children of Israel in remembering the fish you ate in Egypt, that is, in the world.

Novice.—Sometimes I cannot help remembering it.

Monk.—The word fish brings back to my memory a malicious trick which was played by the devil upon a recluse.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Of the recluse Herman, to whom the devil offered horse-dung under the guise of fish.

Brother Gotteschalk of Volmuntſtein told me that one day the devil assumed the form of an acquaintance and brought a plate of fish to Brother Herman, the recluse of Arnsberg. It was ſtill early in the morning, and he told him to put it down and go away. When the time came to cook the fish, he found in the plate nothing but horsedung.

Novice.—Is it not possible that the recluse may have been longing for fish, and that this illusion of the devil was a punishment for that weakness?

Monk.—That is very likely. By the fact that the children of Israel luſted after fish and flesh and onions and garlic, I am reminded of a dangerous temptation to which a penitent succumbed by the means of garlic.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

Of the traitor Steinhard who fell by means of garlic.

In the diocese of Cologne there are two bands of knights, very ſtrong both in numbers and wealth, and equally magnanimous in honour. One of them draws its origin from the town of Bacheim, and the other from that of Gurzenich. At one time there was between them such a violent and mortal hatred, that it could be allayed by none, not even by the bishop, who was their liege lord; but every day it was renewed by plunderings, burnings and murders. Those of Gurzenich built for themselves, on their border, a fortress in a wood, not indeed through fear of their enemies, but that they might have a place of assembly whether for security or for any expedition.

They had as a servant a native of the country named Steinhard, to whose care they entrusted the keys of the fortress. He, at the instigation of the devil, secretly sent a message to the enemy, offering to betray both his masters and their fortress pretending some cause of complaint against them. But the knights of Bacheim distrusted this proposal, and gave little attention to his words. When he had sent the same messenger a second, and then a third time, they armed themselves and came on the appointed day in a large band for fear of treachery, to a place near the castle, where they waited for the serving man.

When the traitor went out to them and found them still hesitating, he at last convinced them by bringing all the swords of his masters, who were taking their mid-day siesta in the fort. Then the armed band entered the building and slew all the knights, and received the serving-man into their own band as they had promised. Afterwards that miserable wretch was stricken with terror and compunction for his execrable crime, and went to Rome, where he confessed his guilt and undertook a severe penance; but, yielding to temptation he quickly broke his vow. Returning to the Pope he renewed his penitence but again failed in obedience.

When he had done this several times, the lord penitentiary grew weary of him, and hoping to get rid of him, for he was convinced that nothing would be of any use to him, said: "Can you tell me of anything that you could undertake as a penance, and really carry out?" He replied: "Never have I been able to eat garlic; I am sure that if I were to undertake abstinence from that food as a penalty for my sins, I should never transgress." Whereupon the confessor said: "Go, and in future as a punishment for your great sins, eat no garlic."

On his way out of the city the man noticed some garlic in a garden, and, tempted by the devil, immediately began to hanker after it. He stood still and looked at the garlic, and the temptation grew urgent upon him. The longing increased until the unhappy man found it impossible to go away, and yet he dared not put out his hand to the forbidden herb. Why make a long story of it? At length gluttony conquered

obedience, he went into the garden and ate. Wonderful to relate the garlic which he never could touch, even when cooked and carefully prepared, so long as he might eat it without sin, now he devoured raw and unripe, because a prohibition was laid upon it. Thus vilely conquered by temptation, he returned to the papal court in much confusion and told what he had done. But the penitentiary drove him away in anger, and ordered him never to trouble him again. What became of the wretched man finally, I have never heard.

Novice.—Unhappy is the nature of man, which is thus prone to transgression! But will you tell me in what kind of gluttony sinned that man of God, who was slain by a lion for eating in Bethel?

Monk.—Not for eating, but for eating against the Divine command, and because he was beguiled into eating in a forbidden place, did he incur such a punishment. How great is the guilt of eating or drinking in defiance of a command, whether the food be lawful or unlawful, I will make clear to you by a few examples.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

Of the Provost Florinus, in whose throat a morsel of flesh stuck.

Master Absalon, an honourable and learned man, canon of the Church of S. Victor in Paris, was elected abbot of Springirsbach some years ago. Before he came to take up his election, one of the brethren in a dream saw a lighted candle enter the monastery, which with its own light rekindled the extinguished candles carried in the hands of all the brethren. The interpretation of this vision seemed to be that one was coming who would restore the relaxed discipline of the monastery. In truth, when he became abbot he introduced honourable customs which he had learnt in his own convent, teaching

among other things that both the brethren and sisters of the community, as well as their provost should without exception abstain from the eating of flesh. Later it happened that a certain secular matron took the habit in the Isle of S. Nicholas, which convent belonged to Springirsbach.

On the day this woman took the veil her friends were dining with the provost of the nuns by name Florinus, a very fat man, and well known to me. While all the rest were feeding on flesh and he on fish, in accordance with the order of his abbot Absalon, he saw on the plate of the clerk sitting next to him a mess of flesh, and immediately conceived a desire for it; and putting out his hand, he picked up a small piece, and with a jest put it into his mouth. At once, by the just judgment of God for his disobedience, this morsel descended whole into his throat, so that it obstructed the passage, nor could he by any effort bring it back into his mouth or swallow it down. They carried him from the table, and it seemed by his upturned eyes that he must be suffocated, when the monk Henry, our chamberlain, and at that time dean of Mayenfeld, struck him, as he told me himself, so severe a blow with his fist on the back of the neck, that the obstruction was dislodged. And all realised that the pain and confusion that had fallen on the provost was a punishment for his disobedience. But I wish you to understand that it is not only with the desire of flesh that the devil tempts men, but also with the longing for wine.

CHAPTER XC.

Of the cellarer, who suffering from thirst after compline, was delivered in making his reverence.

One evening after compline, a monk of our Order, who held the office of cellarer, was attacked with intolerable thirst, by the agency of the devil, as afterwards became clear. For a while he wavered, and debated whether to break the rule and

drink, or to abstain at the risk of his life; but at last the temptation gained the upper hand, and he made up his mind to go into the cellar and drink. Meanwhile he had to go through the church, and when passing before a certain altar, he made his customary reverence very carelessly, because his mind was wholly set upon allaying his thirst. After he had gone a little way further, he turned and came back in shame to this same altar, stood still before it and bowed his head with great reverence. When he stood upright again he saw beside him a demon in the form of a monk clad in black, who said: "Let me tell you that if you had not returned to make your reverence, I would have given you such a drink in the cellar that you would never have been able to digest it as long as you lived." Then the devil disappeared and the whole temptation of the thirst he had implanted vanished with him. This was told me by Dom Eustace the abbot of Hemmenrode, who said that it happened seven years ago.

Novice.—In the future I shall be more zealous to make deep reverences.

Monk.—The devil hates every form of humility, especially that by which man acknowledges God as his Creator and himself as His creature. When he sees a man devoutly show to God this homage, which he himself spurned to do, because he desired to set himself on an equality with God, he cannot endure the sight, and flees away in confusion. Wherefore Philip the abbot of Ottenburg, a wise and learned man, of whom I spoke above, used to teach the sisters of the Isle of S. Nicholas, as I have heard from them, in these words: "When the devil tempts you, make a deep reverence in some place where reverence is due, and forthwith he will flee from you." Places where reverence is due are altars, or before a crucifix or the relics of saints; let us bow our heads also at the Gloria Patri, and also to the abbot, and in all those other places which the rule prescribes.

Will you hear now of one who was enticed away from the Order by gluttony, and especially by a longing for wine?

Novice.—Yes, indeed; for many are troubled with a longing for wine, which sometimes causes even the wise to apostatise.

Monk.—I will tell you of a terrible vision which I heard from him to whom the sight of it was granted.

CHAPTER XCI.

Of Henry nicknamed Fikere.

There died a few years ago one of our senior monks, Herman by name, a man of good and strict life, who was precentor of our convent. This man had several visions, one of which I propose to insert here as an example. Soon after he became monk in Hemmenrode, he had a certain other monk as his next door neighbour both in the choir and in the refectory. Several times during the psalms in church he saw cups of wine before the face of this man. He saw these cups with his eyes wide open, and perceived the odour of the wine, but could not see any hands that held them. And while he was wondering over these things, others took the shape before his eyes by the agency of the devil. For in sleep one night he saw a bear standing on its hind legs in front of that other monk, putting its paws upon his breast, and joining his mouth to the ear of the sleeper.

Not long after he apostatised, following the counsel of the devil; for not without reason did the devil entice him away under the appearance of a bear; for the name itself suggests the fact that it bears offspring by the breath of its mouth, and the devil generated in him such a headlong flow of words, that because of his eloquence he became popular with kings and princes. The name of this monk was Henry, and he was nicknamed Fikere. He had been received as a novice by Dom Gisilbert the abbot, who, when he learnt through confession that he had been a Benedictine, took away his precentor's cassock and gave him a cowl; for he is said to have been of the Premonstratensian Order. I have heard that before that he had pretended to be a woman, and had been

received as a woman into a certain convent of nuns, some of whom he corrupted and ruined. At this time he is playing the part of an actor, and perhaps does worse things than that. Let this be enough about gluttony, because I wish to pass on to the vice of luxury.

CHAPTER XCII.

Of luxury and her daughters.

Luxury is the wanton and unbridled prostitution of mind and body, arising from unclean desires. Her daughters are self-love, hatred of God, love of the present world, horror or despair of the future, rashness, inconstancy, inconsiderateness, a blinded mind. The degrees of luxury are fornication, debauchery, adultery, incest, unnatural vice. Luxury, like gluttony, has wrought the greatest evils in the world; it was the chief cause of the flood; it destroyed the five cities with fire and brimstone; it imprisoned the holy Joseph; it laid low numbers of the children of Israel in the desert; this took place when they sinned with the Midianites *and joined themselves to Baal-peor.* It was luxury that bound, weakened and blinded the mighty Samson; it deprived the sons of Eli of the glory of the priesthood and of life itself. It was luxury that made an adulterer and murderer of David, the man after God's own heart. It infatuated the wise Solomon and led him into idolatry; it condemned Susanna and beheaded John the Baptist. Of luxury God speaks through Hosea (ix. 15). Joel also (i. 17, Vulg). Behemoth, according to Job, *lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens* (Job xl. 21), i.e. in places of luxury. When the two excuse themselves in the gospel, he, who had married a wife, answered haughtily, saying : *I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come* (Luke xiv. 20).

Novice.—Why does the Lord in the gospel forbid gluttony directly, and luxury under a figure (Luke xxi. 34 ; xii. 35)?

Monk.—The Creator knew that in all nature luxury arises from gluttony and is nourished by its stimulants; the kinship of the two vices is indicated by the proximity of their organs. It is as if the Lord had said : " That you may escape luxury, indulge the appetite sparingly "; Deprived of food and wine, luxury is starved (Ter. Eun. iv. 5, 6). There are three chief incitements to luxury : high living, costly dress, and idleness. It was of these three which the prophet declared to be the iniquity of Sodom; to wit, *fulness of bread* i.e. *gluttony, pride of life,* i.e. costly clothing, which provokes lust, *and abundance of idleness in her sons and daughters* (Ezek. xvi. 49). Idleness of itself teaches many evils, as Solomon says; it was because of idleness that David sinned with Bathsheba; wherefore a poet says : " If idleness be removed, the arts of Cupid perish (Ov. Rem. Am. 139). Luxury is an evil beast that hates chastity, spares neither sex, and suffers scarcely any to be at peace. It awakes the sleeper, it disturbs the wakeful, now by natural emotions, now by thoughts, and now by objects placed before his eyes. It tempts the beginner, it tempts the full-grown saint, it tempts even the perfect.

Novice.—Much have I heard of the dangers of luxury, and of the remedies against it; I pray you now to give me examples.

Monk.—I will not speak of those who have fallen by consenting to luxury, but of those who have been tempted and shaken, and yet have been preserved by the grace of God.

CHAPTER XCIII.

Of a converted knight whom his wife strove to win back during his time of probation.

A certain wealthy and honourable knight, who had been separated ecclesiastically from his wife, came for conversion to

a house of our Order. To this house he assigned all his property, on condition that a certain life-pension should be paid to his wife, who had undertaken to live the life of a religious in a convent. I will not name either the knight or the monastery, lest perchance any of those I shall speak of may be still alive, and suffer shame.

When he began his noviciate, the devil so inflamed the wife that she refused to keep the pact and demanded the return of the husband who had now become a monk. This of course produced no result, whereupon she came to the monastery with some friends of hers to lay an ambush for him, and succeeded in a petition to be permitted to speak with him outside the monastery walls. Here he was seized upon by the knights, her friends, who tried to put him on a horse to carry him off; but no sooner did they lift him up on one side than he slipped off on the other; and finding that they could in no way succeed, they went home with the matron.

All that year she gave no further sign, but when his probation was over, it became necessary for him to pay a visit to his house, and there he found his wife. She, pretending that she wished to speak with him in private, took him into a room, and having quietly closed the door behind him, began to woo him with kisses and embraces; for she hoped that if she could induce him to sin, he would leave the Order and come back to her. But Christ, the Son of the pure Virgin, who delivered the innocent boy Joseph from the hands of the adulterers, delivered also this soldier of His from the unlawful embraces of his lawful wife. For he shook himself free of her arms, and came forth uninjured, unsinged by the flame.

Novice.—This was indeed a great temptation.

Monk.—Greater still was that which follows.

CHAPTER XCIV.

Of the grievous temptation of Richwin the cellarer by the letter of a nun.

A certain youth of Cologne, Richwin by name, entered upon his noviciate in our house. He passed some time of his probation in much devotion and tranquillity, quietly learning the life of the Order. The devil, envying his peace and safety, ſtirred up so violent a war in his heart by means of a nun of the blessed Cecilia, whose convent was in that town, and wounded his flesh so deeply with the ſtings of desire that he could find no peace.

She composed and wrote out a letter of withdrawal from his vows, in which she denounced his conversion, and exhorted him to return to the world, saying that herself, her house and prebend, and all that she had were in his hands for the reſt of his life, if he would come to her. She sent this letter by a servant, and while he was enquiring for the novice, Henry, Richwin's brother, who is now our cellarer, met the man and refused to allow him to speak with him, but ordered him to leave the monaſtery at once, for he feared the very thing which afterwards happened. The servant, however, waited for the novice in the church, gave him the letter and went away. The reading of the letter inflamed him as if a burning javelin had been driven into his heart; and from that hour he was so ſtrongly tempted, that time and again he made up his mind to return to the world, but yet was always held back by the pious prayers and exhortations of the brethren.

One day when he was undergoing his trial by himself, he threw himself face downward upon the ground, ſtretching out his feet over the theshold of his cell, and crying with a loud voice: "Unless, devil, thou drag me away by the feet, never will I follow thee." At laſt by the grace of God he triumphed, and became a monk. When I asked him if he ſtill felt any traces of the old thoughts, he replied: "Truly, brother, those temptations which used to pierce my heart now scarcely touch the hem of my garment." Later he became

our senior cellarer, and held that office until his death. Here is an example of how the devil sometimes tempts the beginner, the coming examples will show you how he tempts the full grown saint.

CHAPTER XCV.

Of a young monk who was delivered from the temptation of the flesh by the words: "O devil, my confessor commands thee to cease from tempting me."

The abbot Herman, who was at that time prior in Hemmenrode told me of a young monk there who was grievously tempted by the lusts of the flesh. With tears he confessed how this temptation was afflicting him, and the prior consoled him, and said: "When next you are attacked with the stings of the flesh, say thus to the devil in a loud voice: 'Devil, my confessor orders thee to cease from tempting me.'" Later, when the same temptation came upon him, and he was sore beset, simply and confidently and in a loud voice, as he had been instructed, he cried out against the demon: "O devil, my confessor commands thee to cease from tempting me." Wonderful is the virtue of confession! At this word, the devil, the spirit of fornication, fled in confusion and the temptation passed.

Novice.—How do you know that this temptation came from the devil?

Monk.—The apostle calls the sting of the flesh "a messenger from Satan," because it troubled and inflamed him.

Novice.—Am I right in thinking that confession is very necessary against the temptations of the flesh?

Monk.—About this we have already spoken much in the book upon confession. Truly in confession the fuel of sin is diminished, the temptation ceases or is restrained, grace is

increased, the penitent is ſtrengthened by counsel, the devil is confounded and weakened. At other times when this monk was harassed by the same temptation, he repeated the above words according to the advice of his prieſt, and added these: "Why, O devil, doſt thou trouble me? Thou canſt not tempt me more than is allowed by God, who is thy Lord as well as mine." And at once he felt himself helped, for that proud spirit cannot endure a saying like this which lowers his pride.

CHAPTER XCVI.

Of the temptations of a monk who won an imperial crown by his reſiſtance.

Another monk, an older man, and more fervent in his religious life than he of whom I have juſt spoken, was attacked by the spirit of luxury in many ways hard to be borne. Once when he was in the infirmary, he was ſtanding after matins in an angle of the cloiſter, and using the angelic salutation in prayer, when the devil came behind him and hurled at him a flaming dart, so that the monk saw it fly paſt his face, saw how it glittered and how its reflection shone upon the wall. Finding that he was not to be terrified by this, nor driven from the place where he was praying, the fiend ſtirred up about him so great a noise, that the whole floor of the cloiſter where he was ſtanding seemed to resound with the clatter of the boots of the monks running hither and thither. Then as he cared nothing for this phantasm, and was going away after finishing his prayer, he saw as it were a multitude of Moors pursuing him. Another time the spirit of fornication, whose breath sets coals on fire, burnt his body with an intolerable flame of luſt. Now that venerable man, thinking upon the devil's importunity broke out with a loud voice into these words: "Why doſt thou thus cruelly torture me, O devil, for

thou canſt not accomplish againſt me more than God permits. He, who is my Lord, is thy Lord also." The truth thus expressed is that of the confessor of the laſt ſtory. When he said this, the tempter left him in the following manner.

Indeed, after this utterance, it seemed to him that something moving began at once gradually and painfully to creep down his head paſt either ear to his neck, then down his shoulders and sides, and slowly descending through his thighs and legs, went out at his heels. And as the monk himself told me, that spirit's progress was so gradual, as has been said, that it could be felt in one place and not in another; and as soon as it passed out through his feet and fled away, the fire, which it had kindled, died down, and all temptation ceased.

Novice.—I wonder if he had offered any opportunity to the spirit of fornication, which thus terribly tormented him?

Monk.—He told me himself that one day he, with the abbot, was visiting a certain convent of nuns, and a matron of that community, who had been well known to him before his conversion, placed her arm upon his shoulder and looked into his eyes. No doubt he thought about this more than was fitting, though indeed at the time he felt no kind of temptation from it, but afterwards, when the devil brought back to his mind that gaze of hers, he was so tempted from that time forward for several years, that life became a weariness to him. For the greater perfection a man has reached, so much the more is he bound to keep guard over his senses, especially touch and sight; touch, because, as we read in Vitaspatrum, the body of a woman is a fire, and sight, because death enters in by the windows of the eyes. How great merit that monk won in temptation the following ſtory will tell you. When the aforesaid Herman, now abbot of Marienſtatt, was prior in Hemmenrode, this monk was tempted one night with a temptation, not only violent but exceeding perilous; for as the prior learnt from his confession, such were the conditions of that temptation that he would have satisfied it in as brief a time as it takes to turn the hand, if the will to sin had been present. I think indeed that it was a trial of the flesh. He was attacked ſtrongly; he reſiſted manfully; he overcame gloriously.

That same week there came to the prior a certain simple-minded lay-brother from one of the granges, saying that he wished to speak with him privately. And when the opportunity was given him, he said: "My lord prior, during this paſt week I have had a vision in a dream; there ſtood before me a mighty column, and an iron nail was driven into it, and upon that iron nail there hung a moſt beautiful crown, like the crown of our emperor. And there was present there a moſt glorious Lord, who took the crown from the nail with both his hands, and, placing it in my hands, said thus: 'Take this crown, and carry it to the monk,' and here he mentioned him by name, 'because he has won it this night.'" Immediately the prior, who knew of the monk's temptation, underſtood the vision, and interpreted the ſtrong column as the monk, invincible under temptation, the nail which seemed to be of ſteel, as the hard temptation he had undergone and the crown as the reward of his toil (Apoc. iii. 12). That the crown was hung upon the column, *i.e.* that the due reward was given to victory, the apoſtle bears witness (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8).

Novice.—Of what fight is the apoſtle here speaking?

Monk.—Of that which ever goes on againſt the triple foe; to wit, the flesh, the world and the devil. In times of peace it is as pleasing to God that the faithful should always be fighting with vices and evil desires to preserve his innocence, as that he should expose his body to the sword and to torture in times of persecution. Whence comes that hymn of the Church: "The confessor, who suſtains such things in the fight, runs his course as well as the martyr who suffers himself to be pierced and pours forth his blood by the sword."

Novice.—Still, I cannot cease from wondering that God, who is purity itself, should allow religious, holy and perfect men to be oppressed with these unclean temptations, and sometimes for a long time.

Monk.—This is believed to arise according to the dispensation of Divine mercy from two causes; to wit, for the protection of humility, and for the provision of material on which virtue may be exercised. Who in this world has been greater than the apoſtle? and yet it is he who says: *Leſt I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the*

revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger from Satan to buffet me (2 Cor. xii. 7). As the scripture tells us: remnants of the unclean races were left in the promised land *that Israel might be proved by them* (Judg. iii. 4). For when it so pleases God, in one hour He takes away all our temptations.

CHAPTER XCVII.

Of the temptation of the monk Bernard, who in a dream saw himself made an eunuch.

There is a certain priest and monk in Clairvaux, if indeed he is still alive, noble in birth but far more noble in virtue, named Bernard; he at one time was so vexed and troubled by Satan through the goad of the flesh, that he was already determining to give way altogether to temptation, and to return, after all his vain striving, to the world. He had confessed this affliction once, twice, and many times, but still he could gain no relief. At length as if conquered, he went to the prior, and asked him to give him a cloak, saying that he meant to return to the world, because he felt that he must marry. After many prayers the prior persuaded him to wait at any rate for that night. He waited, and the Lord, who saves them that put their trust in Him, comforted him that night in a dream, like those blessed magi, whom he warned not to return to Herod.

Scarcely had he fallen asleep, than behold, afar off, he saw a horrible man, like an executioner, hastening towards him with a long knife in his hand. At this sight he trembled, and no wonder. For he thought that the man rushed upon him with terrible swiftness and cruelly mutilated him. Then awakeing from the horror of this nightmare he thought that he had been made an eunuch, which indeed was true, though not as the vision showed, with a material knife, but by spiritual

grace. In the morning he went to the prior, and told him how he had been delivered, and recounted to him all the vision; and the prior glorified God who had delivered His servant Bernard so marvellously and so swiftly. It is said that to this day he is virgin of his body; and this story is very celebrated in our Order.

Novice.—If holy men are thus foully tempted, I shall not now be so ashamed as hitherto to confess my own unclean temptations; always have I been afraid that my confessors would despise me, if I disclosed anything foul.

Monk.—No wise confessor will despise anyone who accuses himself; rather will he comfort him, fearing lest he himself should be led into similar temptation. I know that such a thing has happened to an aged and saintly priest.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

The life of Dom Everard, the vicar of S. James.

There was a holy and spiritually-minded priest who had charge of the parish of S. James the Apostle at Cologne, and was illustrious for the splendour of his many virtues. For indeed he was learned, humble, chaste and genial, the father of the poor, the protector of the religious, a lover of the whole Christian community, dear to God, and beloved by the whole city. It was this Dom Everard, the vicar of S. James, who foresaw the conversion of our abbot Gevard, as was told in the seventh chapter of the first book. All the virtues, that the blessed Job claims for himself, had been bestowed in great abundance on this righteous man by Divine grace. When in Lent, the sons of the citizens, young men brought up in luxury, came to him to confess their sins, which were chiefly the fleshly sins so much fostered by costly living, because he had never experienced such temptations, he used to upbraid them sometimes more harshly than was expedient, saying: "It is

disgraceful that Christian men should be agitated by such foul emotions," and thus he discouraged the weakly, and brought upon them some measure of despair. But the just and merciful God, who, for the benefit of the flock, suffered Peter to fall, taught His beloved servant by the scourge of temptation, and that he might learn to compassionate the fallen, permitted him a similar affliction (2 Cor. xii. 7). From this he learnt in his own person how he ought to heal others.

At the time when abbot Herman, of whom I spoke above, was newly made a monk, he was tempted and distressed by the stings of the flesh, and having heard the fame of this vicar's sanctity, he went to him in the hope that his merits and prayers might bring him some relief, and found him making his preparation for the mass. He had intended to make his confession, but as there was no time then to do this, he said secretly in his ear: "Father, I am grievously tormented by the stings of the flesh; ask God to deliver me." The other looked at him and replied abruptly in a loud voice: "Truly I am tormented in the same way; how then shall I be able to pray for you?" And as Herman told me himself, he went away much helped by the knowledge that a man, so holy and so aged, suffered the same temptations as himself. I was told by another monk and priest, who knew much about his life, that when at mass he offered the kiss of peace to any of the clerks, he, to avoid temptation, touched with his mouth any part of the other's face, to avoid kissing him.

Since *strength is made perfect in weakness,* the Lord once tempted and afflicted His beloved with violent pains in the head, such as, in one commentary upon the Apostle, are called the *thorn in the flesh,* so severe that he grew weary of life. He found himself unable to pray or to read, and went to a celebrated physician, and asked him, for Christ's sake, to give him some advice against this continuous pain. The other, more intent upon money than upon any heavenly reward, answered: "If you will pay me three marks, I will cure you easily." To whom the holy man replied: "I do not possess three marks, but I will willingly pay you the half of that sum"; but the doctor said: "I cannot work for so little." Then he: "If I had three marks, I would rather give them to

the poor than to you; I commit my sickness to God." Juſt are the judgments of the Lord. When the blessed man had said this and gone away, that very hour the pains in the head completely passed from him and attacked the doctor. None of the volume of the sickness was diminished, nothing of its nature or of its symptoms was altered (Luke iv. 23). This miracle was related at table in my hearing by a canon of S. Severinus, by name Rudolf, by profession himself a doctor.

Novice.—Since the fame of this venerable prieſt is so widely spread in Cologne, I beg of you to be kind enough to tell me anything edifying about him that you may have heard.

Monk.—I have gathered only a few of his many acts, but these I will tell you. One day he was carrying the body of the Lord in a pyx to communicate a sick man and had come into the High Street, which is very narrow, and along which I have often walked myself, and I know it to be a ſtreet very muddy and filthy, and it was here that he met a ſtring of asses laden with corn. On one side the sacks touched the wall, and on the other hung over the kennel. The scholar, who was going before him with a lantern, did indeed get through with much difficulty, now driving the asses out of the way, and now being driven by them. The prieſt, seeing this, and considering that he was a man both old and infirm, began to tremble and grow pale, fearing that he might be pushed by the asses and hurled with the Blessed Sacrament into the mud. It was necessary that this trial should exercise the man of God that his faith might shine the brighter. Perceiving that no human help was available, and inspired by Him, whom he was carrying, he broke into these words: "What are you doing, O asses, do you not consider whom I am carrying in my hands? Stand ſtill, come down from the highway into the kennel, give honour to your Creator, for in His name I give you this command." Wonderful obedience of the dumb animals. At the word of the prieſt they all ſtood ſtill, they all came down into the kennel. Miracle was added to miracle; for though the descent was not easy, not a single sack slipped from the back of any of the beaſts. The saintly man marvelled at their obedience and glorified God, and came to his sick parishioner without mishap. This act of his is well

known to this day in the city of Cologne. How great humility was his, the following incident will show.

It was his regular habit to invite the poor to his dinner table; and it happened one day that two were brought in, one of whom was so afflicted and so revolting to look upon that the other refused to sit at the same table with him. A little table had been prepared for them opposite the priest; and when the man of God had considered the case, honouring Christ in His poor, he called the despised pauper to him, and bade them place a seat for him at his own table, and did not hesitate to eat from the same dish with him, and drink from the same cup.

It is said also to have been his custom to have delicate meats often prepared both for his friends and guests and also for the sick poor whom he knew to be bedridden in their homes. And when these dishes were laid before him, he examined them carefully, inhaled their odour, turned them about with his hand, that thus he might be tempted the more by provoking his appetite, and might deserve the more by not satisfying it for Christ's sake. Then he would say to his servant: "Take this dish to such a widow, or to such a poor or sick man, for truly they need it more than I."

Though by works of this kind his light was shining brightly in the House of God, yet it pleased his Master that the following occasion should make it yet more radiant. Dom Philip, the archbishop of Cologne was heavily weighed down by debt because of the castle he had bought for the Blessed Peter, and being told by some that the vicar of S. James had great sums of money laid by, he sent messengers to borrow the money. The priest told them that he had no money, and gave them the keys of his strong box; wherein the only thing discovered was a pair of leather shoes, carefully greased, which he had bought to give to the poor. The messengers returned with shame, and told the bishop these things; and he, fearing for his own soul, as a certain clerk told me, sent for the venerable priest, and threw himself at his feet, entreating pardon for the wrong he had offered him.

Our Order was especially dear to him, and he wished to take the vows in it, but was dissuaded by certain abbots of the same Order, as I understood, because they knew the

great holiness of his life, and felt that it was essential for those who were still in the world. Full of years and virtues, he departed to be with the Lord, and was buried in the church of the Blessed George the Martyr.

Novice.—If luxury can tempt a man so aged and so holy, I shall never again be surprised that it attacks the young.

Monk.—As I said, there is scarcely any age that luxury spares (Gen. xlviv. 17). Here are examples.

CHAPTER XCIX.

Of a clerk in Soest who was burnt to death on an accusation of adultery.

Not long ago there was a clerk who had come to Soest from another district; his name was Herman, he was young, and comely both in face and figure. On whom a woman who lived in that town cast her eyes, and became so enamoured of him that she said: "All that I have shall be yours, if you will love me." But the youth remembered S. Joseph, and despised all her protestations and promises; and when she found that she could gain nothing, she accused him before the judges of assaulting her. He denied the charge, but was not believed, and was thrust into a close prison, to wit, the cell for malefactors awaiting death. She, under the goad of lust, pretending that the clerk had made her mad, climbed the wall with a ladder, threw herself down, embraced the youth, and implored him to consent to her; but not even so did she gain anything.

When the judges heard of it, they drew forth the innocent youth and sent him to the stake as if he had been a vile magician. And when he was half consumed in the flames, so that his breast was burst and his lungs exposed, then, in a loud voice so that all could hear, he chanted the angelic

salutation of the Ave Maria. Immediately one of the by-ſtanders, a relation of the woman, snatched up a burning coal and thruſt it into his mouth, crying: "I will put a ſtop to those prayers of yours," and so choked him. What need of more? He died, and his bones were buried in the open field. At his tomb lights were often seen, and miracles were wrought. Then the kinsfolk of the aforesaid adulteress were terrified, proſtrated themselves before the feet of the canons of S. Patroclus, entreated for pardon and undertook penance for the death of the righteous; later a church was built over his tomb. Luxury, in the form of a woman, *like a serpent in the way,* i.e. openly, attacked this youth and burnt his body, but did not overcome his soul. To another it came as *an adder in the path,* as follows.

CHAPTER C.

Of a lay-brother, at whose feet a serving girl made her bed.

A few years ago, a lay-brother, whom I knew well, a devout and upright man, had conducted into Flanders a barge containing wine of his monaſtery. One night, the maid servant of his hoſt, after preparing as usual a bed for him in the upper room of the house, laid another bed for herself at the lay-brother's feet. When he had said compline, he went to bed; and as the light was out, she undressed silently, and lay down in the bed she had prepared, touching the feet of the lay-brother with her bare feet, and coughing to let him know that she was there. But the lay-brother never perceived the wiles of this adder, thinking that the bed had been prepared for some other man. She bit the heels of the horse, i.e. of the lay-brother, but its rider, i.e. the spirit of the man, did not fall backwards by any consent; for as soon as he heard a woman's voice, he got up forthwith,

dreſſed himſelf, went to the window of the room, and there, occupied in prayer, awaited the morning. For ſome time ſhe remained in ſuſpenſe, and at laſt aroſe, and ſtole down-ſtairs in confuſion.

Novice.—What is this *ceraſtes,* or horned adder that you ſpeak of?

Monk.—It is a ſerpent that has horns, horns that are ſharper than any ſteel, with a double edge like a ſword. The Greek word for horns is *cerata.* Luxury is a ceraſtes, becauſe it not only ſlays the ſoul, but alſo irreparably corrupts the body (1 Cor. vi. 18).

CHAPTER CI.

Of a provoſt who on his death bed ſinned with a woman in hope of recovery.

I remember a prieſt who was provoſt in an Order of Regulars, whom luxury, very inſidiouſly and very perilouſly, toſſed on its horns by means of a woman. For when he was in very ſore ſickneſs, he was told by the doctor, or rather by the devil through the mouth of the doctor, that he could not get well unleſs he conſorted with a woman. He, thinking only of this preſent life, and forgetful of the future, did this. Nevertheleſs it profited him nothing, but rather injured him, for within a few days he died. And thus by the perſuaſion of the old ſerpent, the time of penance became for him a time of ſin. The judgment of his ſoul I leave to God. These things were told me in the very houſe where he had been provoſt by a prieſt of the ſame Order, known to me both by ſight and name.

Novice.—We ſpoke before of that maxim of the holy Job: *the life of man upon the earth is temptation;* is not this to be underſtood about both ſexes?

Monk.—Certainly ; because the word *man,* as used here, includes both sexes, and both sexes are subject to the same emotions. And as the devil overthrows and enervates men by means of women, so by means of men does he win over a multitude of women. Whence it is said of him by the Lord to Job : *Lo, now his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the naval of his belly.* Upon which passage S. Gregory says that luxury lies for men in the loins and for women in the naval. And how greatly they are sometimes tempted I will show you by examples.

CHAPTER CII.

Of a châtelaine who checked the sting of the flesh in water.

A noble matron, as was told me by a priest who was also a monk, was one day left alone in her castle ; and I know not what she was doing or thinking, but the spirit of fornication did not suffer her to remain alone, for suddenly she was so violently inflamed that she ran hither and thither, and could neither stand nor sit, as if she had received a burning iron into her body. When she could no longer endure the torment, she cast aside all thought of honour, went down to the porter of the castle, and besought him with much urgency to lie with her. But he, being a good man, replied : " What is this, lady? are you mad? Think of God, think of your own honour." She, caring nothing for either, when she saw herself repulsed by the porter, went out of the castle, ran to the river which flowed by the walls, threw herself into its cold waters and remained there until she had quenched all the smouldering fuel of her desire. Then she went back to the porter, thanked him for his refusal and said : " If anyone were now to offer me a thousand marks of gold, I would not suffer what I asked from you

a little while ago ; " and she returned to her own rooms. The merciful Lord acts like a loving mother, who permits her beloved child to crawl near the fire and enjoy the warmth, but when it wishes to enter it, she draws it back with exceeding haste. Of this you will hear more fully in the following chapter.

CHAPTER CIII.

Of a nun in England who found temptation in the president of her convent.

In England there was a certain spiritually-minded man who was set to preside over a convent of nuns. Now he was of tall stature, and comely to look upon, with ruddy cheeks and bright eyes, so that scarcely any, who were ignorant of his spiritual qualities, would have guessed at the depth of his religion. One of the younger nuns of that community, by often gazing upon him, began to be so tempted and so grievously troubled by the stings of the flesh, that at last she put away all modesty and opened to him her passion. The holy man, having the fear of God before his eyes, was horrified, and tried by all means in his power to divert the maiden's thoughts, saying: " You are the spouse of Christ ; if I were to corrupt the spouse of my Lord, He would not suffer it to pass with impunity ; neither could such a crime long lie hidden from the eyes of men." Then she said that if he would not consent, she would die ; and he replied: " Since it cannot be otherwise, let it be as you wish. Where then shall we meet? " She answered: " This night I will come to you wherever you may appoint." Then he said: " No, it must take place in daylight " ; and he showed the maiden a shed in the orchard, solemnly charging her to come thither at a certain hour without anyone seeing or knowing. She came, and the man of God said to her:

"Lady, it is right and expedient for you that you should first see this body of mine, which you so eagerly desire, and then if it still pleases you, you can satisfy yourself with it." When he had thus spoken and she remained silent, he put off his garments, took off the rough hair shirt which he wore next his person, and showed her his naked body, eaten with vermin, scarred with the hair shirt, covered with sores, and black with grime, and said: "See what it is that you love, and take your pleasure if you still desire it."

When she saw this proof of his austerity, her heart sank within her, and turning now red and now pale, she cast herself at his feet and besought pardon. Then he: "Go back secretly into your convent, and see that you do not betray my secret till after my death." From that hour the temptation, which had been aroused in the virgin by the wantonness of unbridled eyes, departed from her for ever. Let these be enough examples of the temptation of luxury.

Novice.—With what weapons should we fight against these seven vices of which you have discoursed so long?

Monk.—With their opposite virtues.

Novice.—What are virtues, and why are they so called?

Monk.—Virtues are spiritual qualities by which we walk uprightly. They are called virtues, because they stand opposed to the vices. Humility should stand against pride, gentleness against anger, affection against envy, spiritual cheerfulness against melancholy, open-handedness against avarice, moderation in food and drink against gluttony, chastity against luxury. Moreover, if in the struggle against temptations the virtues conquer the vices, the victory is deserved, and eternal reward follows after the deserving. For this has been promised by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Way, in example; the Truth, in promise; and the Life, in reward. To Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be honour and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

BOOK V

OF DEMONS

CHAPTER I.

Of demons, their numbers, their malice and their hostility to man.

It seems fitting that after temptation we should treat of the tempters. Demons are called tempters, because they are either the authors or provokers of all the temptations that draw men to sin. If the devil tempted the first man in Paradise, if he presumed to tempt Christ in the Desert, what man is there in the world that he will leave untempted? To every man there are assigned two angels, the good for protection, the evil for trial.

Novice.—I have no doubt in my mind about the holy angels, because they are often spoken of in the writings of the prophets; but I should like you to show me from the scriptures of either Testament what demons are, how many they are, how wicked, and how appointed to eternal flames.

Monk.—There is abundance of proof of these things. Of Lucifer, that is the devil, so called because of his beauty and his fall, Isaiah says: *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning* (Isa. xiv. 12). That he became the devil, and that he fell from heaven, the Saviour bears witness, when He says: *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven* (Luke x. 18). Job says of him: *There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them* (Job. i. 6); and in

the Psalm David, speaking of the traitor Judas, says: *Let Satan ſtand at his right hand* (Ps. cviv. 5). Also Habakkuk speaking of Chriſt: *The devil went forth at his feet* (Hab. iii. 5. Vulg.), and in many other places the scripture speaks of the devil. That he was not alone, and that he did not fall alone, John witnesses in the Apocalypse (xii. 78). His malice changed into a dragon the glorious Lucifer, of whose beauty and comeliness is said by Ezekiel: *Thou art the seal of the image of God, full of wiſdom and perfect in beauty. Thou haſt been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious ſtone was thy covering* (Ez. xxviii. 12. Vulg.), etc. It is believed that the tenth part of the angels fell, and on account of their multitude the Apoſtle calls them the *powers of the air* (Eph. ii. 2), for in falling they filled the air. Of their presumption the prophet speaks to Chriſt in the Psalm (Ps. lxxiv. 24). And the Lord in the gospel says to the Jews: *Ye do the deeds of your father the devil; he was a liar from the beginning and the father of it* (John viii. 41, 44). That he is hoſtile to men, Job is witness (Job xl. 23). Wherefore the apoſtle Peter warns us: (1 Pet. v. 8, 9). What is said about one is to be underſtood of the reſt since the singular number is often used for the plural. That they are to be damned eternally is deduced from the words of the Lord, in Matt. xxv. 41. And I think that the fifth book is the right place to treat of the demons, because the philosophers call five the apoſtate number, since if joined to any other odd number as a multipler, it always shows itself, perhaps at the beginning, certainly at the end. Thus the devil, withdrawing from the foursquare of eternal ſtability, is the firſt to ally himself with wicked men, who are as unequal numbers, and shows himself in his iniquity, often at the beginning, and always at the end of act or speech.

Novice.—I confess that the point wherein I doubted has been proved to me by the teſtimony of holy scripture; but I do not confess myself satisfied, unless you make these things clear by living examples.

Monk.—That there are demons, that they are many, and that they are wicked, I shall be able to show you by many examples.

CHAPTER II.

Of the knight Henry who disbelieved in the existence of demons, and saw them with his own eyes through a necromancer.

There was a knight, whose name was Henry, who came from the castle of Falkenstein and was butler of our fellow monk, Cæsarius, at that time abbot of Prüm. Now, as I have heard from Cæsarius hmself, this knight did not believe in the existence of demons, but looked upon anything that he heard or ever had heard about them as mere frivolous nonsense ; and therefore he sent for a certain clerk named Philip, who was most famous for his skill in necromancy, and besought him earnestly to show him some demons. His reply was that demons were both horrible and dangerous to look upon, and that it was not good for all men to see them. But when the knight continued eagerly to urge his request, he went on : " If you will guarantee that I shall receive no harm from your friends or relations, if by chance you shall be deceived or terrified or injured by the demons, I will consent." And he gave him the guarantee.

One day at noon, because demonic power is at its greatest at that hour, Philip took the knight to a cross road, drew a circle round him with a sword, placed him within it, and explained to him the law of circle within circle, and then said : " If you put forth any of your limbs outside this circle before I come back, you will die, because you will immediately be dragged forth by the demons and torn in pieces." He warned him further, that whatever they might beg of him, he must give them nothing, and promise them nothing, and that he should not make the sign of the cross ; and added : " The demons will tempt you and terrify you in many ways, but yet they will not be able to hurt you, if you follow carefully my instructions " ; and then he left him.

While he sat alone within the circle, lo ! he saw coming against him floods of waters, then he heard the grunting of

swine, the howling of wind, and many other similar phantasms, with which the demons sought to terrify him. But as an expected javelin does not wound, he found strength in himself to resist all these attacks. Last of all, he saw in a neighbouring wood a figure like a horrible human shadow higher than the tops of the trees, hastening towards him ; and he felt at once that this was the devil, as indeed it was. When he reached the circle, he stood still, and asked the knight what he wanted of him. He was in appearance like a gigantic man, very huge and very black, clothed in a dark robe, and so hideous that the knight could not look upon him ; but he replied : " You have done well to come, because I wanted to see you." " What for? " he asked, " Because I have heard so much about you." When the devil asked what he had heard about him, the knight replied : " Very little good and much evil." To which the devil said : " Men often judge and condemn me without good cause ; I have harmed no one, I never attack anyone unless provoked. Your Master Philip is a good friend of mine, and I of his ; ask him if I have ever offended him. I do his pleasure, and he obliges me in all things ; it was by his summons that I have come to you now.

Then the knight : " Where were you when he called you? " The demon answered : " As far on the other side of the sea as the sea is from here ; and so I think it is fair that you should give me some reward for my trouble." When the knight asked him what he wished for, he replied : " I beg you to give me your cloak." The knight said he would not give it him ; and then he demanded his girdle, and then a sheep from his flock. Finding all these requests refused, last of all he asked for the cock that was in his courtyard. Then the knight said : " Why, what use would it be to you? " and the demon answered ; " He will sing to me." " But how would you take him? " " You need not trouble about that ; all I ask is that you will consent to give him to me."

Then the knight said : " I will not give you anything at all ; " and went on : " Tell me, where do you get all your knowledge from? " The demon said : " There is no evil done in all the world that is hidden from me. To show you

that this is true, I tell you that it was in such and such a town, and in such and such a house that you loſt your innocence, and that in this place and that that you committed such and such sins ; " nor was the knight able to deny that he had spoken truth.

Novice.—Surely the knight can never have confeſſed these sins ; for how could the devil know them if they had been confeſſed?

Monk.—If he had confeſſed with the intention of sinning again, he would in no degree have taken away the devil's knowledge.

Novice.—I am glad to hear what you say, because I remember you said the same thing in the sixth chapter of the third book.

Monk.—For some time the devil continued to make all kinds of requeſts, but only met with repeated refusals ; and at laſt he ſtretched out his arm towards the knight, as if intending to drag him out and carry him off, and so terrified him, that he fell backwards and cried out. Hearing his voice, Philip ran up, and at his coming the phantom immediately disappeared. From that time forward the knight was deathly pale, and never regained his former healthy colour ; he lived very carefully, and had no doubts henceforth concerning the exiſtence of demons. He died a little while ago.

CHAPTER III.

Of a prieſt, who was drawn out of the circle by the demons, and so injured that he died within three days.

About the same time there was a foolish prieſt, who sent for Philip, and gave him money on condition that he would show him the demons. Accordingly, he placed him in a

circle in the fashion already described, and gave him the usual instructions, but the priest was frightened and drawn out by the devil, and so injured before Philip could return, that he died on the third day. His house was confiscated by Walter, Count of Luxemberg. I myself have seen this Philip who was killed a few years ago by the agency, it is believed, of his master and friend, the devil.

CHAPTER IV.

Also of a clerk in Toledo, who was drawn out by the wiles of the demons and carried to hell.

Our fellow monk, Gotteschalk, of Volmarstein, of blessed memory told me a story which I must not omit. One day he asked the aforesaid Philip to tell him some of the more remarkable things that he had seen in the practice of his art, and the other replied as follows: "I will tell you a very wonderful thing which actually happened at Toledo during my own lifetime.

There were in that city many scholars from different countries studying the art of necromancy, and among them some young men from Swabia and Bavaria, who, hearing from their master certain stupendous and incredible statements, and determined to search out the truth, said to him: "Master, we beg you to give us ocular demonstration of what you have been telling us, so that we may gain some result of our studies."

He tried to put them off, but failed, owing to the persistence of their national character; and so, at the proper hour, he took them into a field, drew a circle round them, and warned them, under the penalty of death, to remain within the circle, and not to give anything to any who might ask, or take anything from any who might offer. Then he withdrew a little way from them, and called the demons by

his incantations. Immediately they showed themselves under the appearance of well-armed soldiers, practising their military games around the youths. At one time they would pretend to fall, at another they would stretch out their lances and swords against them, trying in every way to induce them to leave the circle. When they found that this was of no avail, they changed themselves into very beautiful girls, and danced about them, inviting the young men with every kind of alluring movement. One of them, more beautiful than the rest, chose out one of the scholars, and as often as she danced up to him, held out a gold ring, inflaming him to love both by inward suggestion, and by the outward motion of the body. When she had done this over and over again, the youth was at last overcome, and put his finger outside the circle to receive the ring, and immediately she drew him out by that finger, and disappeared with him.

As soon as the quarry was caught, the whole assembly of friends became a whirling mist. The scholars raised an outcry, the master ran up, and they all complained to him of the loss of their companion. He answered: "It is not my fault, you urged me to this; I told you what would happen; you will never see him again." They at once rejoined: "Unless you get him back for us, we will kill you." Then afraid for his life, for he knew what madmen Bavarians are, he answered: "I will try if there may be any hope for him." Then he summoned the chief of the band of demons, reminded him of all his faithful service, and told him that this would be a great blow to his teaching and that he himself would be killed by his pupils, if the youth were not restored. The devil was moved with compassion, and replied: "To-morrow I will hold a council in such a place for your sake; you must be present, and if you can in any way get him back by the vote of the meeting, I shall be pleased."

Why should I say more? The council of the fiends met at the command of the chief, and the master made his complaint of the violence done to his disciple. The adversary replied: "Sir, I have done him neither wrong nor violence, he was disobedient to his master, he did not keep the law of the circle." While they thus disputed, the leader spoke to a

certain demon, his coadjutor, as to the decision they were to give: "Oliver, you were always a good counsellor, you are never a respecter of persons in defiance of justice; solve the question of this dispute." The other replied: "I decide that the youth should be restored to his master," and turning at once to the adversary he said: "You must give him back, because you were too importunate."

The others gave assent to this decision, and at the command of the judge, the scholar was at once brought back from hell and restored to his master, the council was broken up, and the master returned to his disciples, rejoicing in the booty he had recovered; but the face of him thus brought back was so haggard, and so ghastly pale with a fixed and death-like pallor, that he seemed only now to have returned from the tomb. He told his companions what he had seen in hell, and showed them by example rather than by word how hateful to God and how accursed was all such teaching; and leaving Toledo, he became a monk in a monastery of our Order.

Novice.—I call to mind now those other two, to wit, the youth who took the vows at Toledo on the warning of his dead comrade, and the clerk who was converted by seeing the punishment of the Landgrave, as you told me in the thirty-third and thirty-fourth chapters of the first book.

Monk.—Conrad, one of our elder monks, told me that before his conversion a certain necromancer made a display to him one night, and he saw demons under different forms in the light of the full moon. Wherefore there can be no doubt of their existence, since they can be seen, heard and touched by men.

Novice.—Athough it has been proved to me that there are demons, nevertheless I should be better pleased to hear the testimony of the religious about them rather than that only of worldly men.

Monk.—That demons exist, and that they are many, I will show you, not by doubtful examples of worldly persons, but by most faithful evidence of the religious, about which you can have no doubt.

CHAPTER V.

Of Herman, the abbot of Marienſtatt, who saw demons under various forms.

Dom Herman, now abbot of Marienſtatt, was a man whose ſpirituality and authority are well known to you. He was a man of ancient race and noble birth, and before his conversion had been canon of Bonn Cathedral; then he became a monk in Hemmenrode, and when, not long afterwards, our convent was sent out from that monaſtery, he was appointed the firſt abbot of the new community. After a few years we loſt him, as he was reſtored to Hemmenrode, being elected as abbot there. At that time there was a lay-brother, by name Henry, maſter of the grange, called Hart, a man good and upright, of mature age and virgin in body. Among other gifts that he had received from the Lord was this, that he used often to see demons, under different forms, passing to and fro in the choir at the night offices.

Once, in confession, he told this to Herman, who, being kindled by his example into a desire to see demons himself, prayed very earneſtly to God that He would deign to grant him this favour; and immediately his prayer was heard. For when, on the next S. Martin's Day, he was ſtanding in the choir at matins, he saw a demon in the form of a thick-set peasant, come in near the lower part of the presbytery. This demon had a broad breaſt, pointed shoulders and a short neck; his hair was fashionably dressed in front, the reſt hanging down like drooping ears of corn; and he went to a certain novice and ſtood in front of him. When Dom Herman, who was not yet abbot, had gazed upon him for a time, and, after turning his eyes away for a little, again wished to see him, he had already disappeared. At another time the demon, transforming himself into a calf's tail, threw himself upon a bench againſt which the same novice was leaning, and then very smoothy and gradually dragged himself towards him; and immediately this tail touched his shoulders, the novice

at once became faulty in his singing and when he touched the ground with his fingers in acknowledgement of his fault in accordance with the Rule, the demon as if suddenly driven by a whirlwind, withdrew from him an arm's length, and so disappeared. For not even that spirit of pride, who with *his tail draws the third part of the ſtars of heaven* (Apoc. xii. 4), can reſiſt a single sign of humility. That novice was Father Alexander, who is now prior in Hemmenrode. It is likely that at that time, he was allowing some light thoughts, so that the frivolous emotions they engendered were a temptation and a hindrance to his devotions.

Novice.—It pleases me to hear this.

Monk.—Further, on the vigil of S. Kunibert (he was then a simple monk) he saw from his place in the abbot's choir, two demons enter near the presbytery, and go gradually towards the abbot's ſtall between the choirs of the monks and novices. When they came opposite to the angle where the walls meet, there sprang forth a third demon, who joined the other two, and went out with them. They passed so close to him that he could have touched them with his hand. Looking at them more closely, he noticed that they did not touch the ground with their feet, being powers of the air. One of the firſt two had the face of a woman, and was wearing a black veil, and was covered with a black cloak. And as he told me, that monk, who had been harbouring the third demon, was a notorious grumbler and thrall of accidie, one who slept willingly in church, and chanted reluctantly, being ever more ready to drink than to sing; one to whom the shorteſt services seemed always too long.

At another time, when he was now prior, on the vigil, I think, of S. Columbanus, the abbot's choir was beginning the firſt psalm for matins: *Lord how are they increaſed that trouble me* (Ps. iii.), the demons so thronged the choir that by their number and going to and fro, the brethren quickly broke down in the psalm, and when the other side of the choir tried to put them right, the demons flying across and mingling with them so diſturbed them that they no longer knew what they were singing, and soon each side was shouting againſt the other. The lord abbot Euſtace and prior Herman, seeing this,

came down from their ſtalls and tried to remedy the confusion, but were unable to reſtore the singing or to change the discord into harmony. At length, that short and well known psalm was somehow finished, after a great deal of difficulty and confusion, and the devil, the origin of the trouble, departed with his satellites, and peace once more descended upon the singers. It was at this time that the prior saw the devil flying in the form of a dragon of the length of a spear, and passing close to a lighted lamp, so that his departure was plain to him as he watched. The other demons had shadowy bodies somewhat larger than those of infants and their faces were the colour of iron that has firſt been drawn from the furnace.

Novice.—Since there were so many demons collected together in one place to interrupt one congregation, I cannot doubt that in the whole world their numbers muſt be countless.

Monk.—The gospel bears witness that a legion entered into one man. Wherefore since they are so numerous and so evil, and alas ! as has been said, so exceeding eager to put ſtumbling blocks in the way of our salvation, my advice is that when we ſtand up to sing, we should be very careful and very earneſt, very fervent and very humble, leſt the vice of complacent shouting should extinguish the virtue of holy fervour. For juſt as the evil spirits are diſturbed by the devotion of our hearts, so do they rejoice in the self-satisfied uplifting of our voices.

One night when the precentor for the week began the antiphon of the 94th psalm, and the monk next him took it up on a rather low note, Herwic, who was then sub-prior, together with the other elder men joined in on the same note. There was ſtanding in the lower part of the choir a certain not very wise young monk, who, being annoyed that the psalm was begun on so low a note, raised it by nearly five tones. The sub-prior reſiſted, but the other refused to give way, and showing much pertinacity, gained the upper hand. In the next verse some on the other side aided him, but the others ſtopped singing because of the scandal and the dreadful discord. At this moment prior Herman saw a demon, like a white-hot iron, leave the monk who had thus gained his end, and pass over to

those on the opposite side who had taken his part. From which we may gather that humble chanting with real devotion is more pleasing to God than voices raised in arrogance to heaven.

Another night when he had summoned the brethren to vigil, and was standing in his place looking at the east window and wondering at the brightness of the light, there passed before his vision a demon like an Ethiopian, of huge size, and as black as if he had that moment been drawn out of hell fire. This demon came through the upper choir, passed by him and went out.

Again at another time when he had gone a little way from his stall to encourage the brethren, he saw a demon of horrible aspect pass with a rush between the stalls of abbot and prior; he gave a baleful glance at the prior's choir and seeing that no way lay open for him because the prior himself was blocking it, betook himself hurriedly into the stalls of the novices and joined himself to a certain senior monk who was sitting there. This monk was not unlike in character to that other who had harboured the demon, being too fond of drink, lazy, and a great grumbler. See how such things ought to be a warning to monks afflicted with accidie.

Novice.—Both these stories, as well as those which I remember you told about accidie in the former book ought to be a terror to any who go to sleep in church or sing the psalms carelessly.

Monk.—Often did he see demons in very minute forms flitting about the church, and often he saw them glittering in various places with a sinister light. Conscious that the sight of them was injurious to the eyes, and well aware of their malice, one day, after saying the mass of the Holy Spirit, he besought God that he might see them no more. Then suddenly the universal enemy showed himself in the form of a very bright eye, about the size of a man's fist, in which some living presence seemed to dwell, as though he said: "Look well at me now, for you will never see me again." Yet he did see him afterwards, but neither so clearly nor so frequently as before.

He was appointed abbot in Marienstatt at the time when the

noble lady, Alice, Countess of Froizbreth was being buried there as foundress of the monastery, and while her body was still lying in the coffin, he saw a demon circling round the bier, and searching every corner with his eyes as if he had lost something belonging to him.

Less than a year ago, when, as our prior, he was going into the church at the canonical hour, after translating some secular business outside, he saw a demon marching before him as if he were his guide. The form of the body he had assumed was misty and unsubstantial, like a cloud. Then a few days later, one night after matins, he saw him stand before the prior under a similar appearance.

Novice.—Why is it that you were so careful to conceal the name of this venerable abbot when you were writing your moral homilies on the Infancy of the Saviour, and described there nearly all these visions?

Monk.—Of his great love he revealed to me the secret things of his life, but urged upon me at the time that I should not disclose his name; a restriction that he afterwards withdrew on my earnest persuasion, for well I knew that the value of his authority would give great weight to all I wrote. I now remind you of the virtues of that venerable man, whose sanctity was so well known, and whose authority so unquestioned that no one can fairly cast doubt on any of his statements; his visions will be a warning both for present and future generations.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the monk Christian and the visions he saw.

A certain venerable priest, Christian both in name and in reality, came to take the vows at Hemmenrode. The demons were exceedingly importunate with him, and showed themselves to him often, both before and after his conversion. Another secular priest named Charles also became a novice

in the same monaſtery at this time, and our prior Ysenbrand was a companion of his in his probation. This Charles, following the counsel of the demon, to whom he willingly liſtened, consented to the gratifications of gluttony and the flesh, and was continually pretending sickness, feigning to limp, and lying long in bed. When he was put in the infirmary, so much did he pamper his body and neglect his soul, limping always when compelled to move about, and looking in at the kitchen, and trying to discover what food was being prepared for the infirmary, that the aforesaid Chriſtian often saw a demon following him, mimicking his limp and his way of looking in at the kitchen, and everything he did. At laſt drawing back before his year of probation was ended, he returned to the fleshpots of Egypt, and being of a fleshly mind, made flesh his goal.

Once when the brethren were prepared for the day's work and were ſtanding round the hall after chapter, waiting for the sound of the gong, some of them showed themselves half-hearted by the lazy way in which they obeyed the signal, and the blessed Chriſtian saw several cats, marked with disfiguring patches of mange, or rather demons under the appearance of cats, fawning upon these monks with the waving of their tails, and caressing them in sign of familiarity by rubbing themselves againſt them. But on those who kept their vigour and goodwill they did not dare even to look.

One day when he had proſtrated himself in prayer before one of the altars, a demon, changing himself into an enormous toad, the size of a hen, sat down before his face. He was so terrified by this sight that he got up and fled from the place, for at that time he did not so well underſtand the wiles of the devil.

Novice.—These visions seem to me to be moſt useful warnings againſt three vices; the firſt againſt gluttony; the second againſt vanity, and the third againſt weariness in prayer.

Monk.—Although we may not see him, the devil often takes from us all the sweetness of prayer by the horrors of such phantasms. I heard all these visions from the abbot Herman and the monk Walter of Birbech, who were his close friends. You shall hear in the ninth book more of his acts and visions.

CHAPTER VII.

Of demons who were seen in Mainz upon an over-dressed woman.

The following story was told me by a worthy citizen, who assured me that it actually happened in his own time at Mainz, if my memory serves me. A priest was going round his church and sprinkling the people with holy water, and when he came to the door of the church, he met there, striding haughtily in, a matron dressed out with all kinds of adornments, as gay as a peacock; and on her skirts, which she was dragging far behind her, he saw a number of demons sitting. They were as small as dormice, and as black as Ethiopians, grinning and clapping their hands and leaping hither and thither like fish inclosed in a net; for in truth feminine extravagance is a net of the devil. Now when he saw this chariot of demons he bade the woman wait outside, called the congregation to come to the door and adjured the devils not to move. She stood there in terror, while he prayed that the people might have grace to see the vision, and because he was a good and upright man his prayer was granted. When the woman realised that the extravagance of her dress had thus made her an object of mockery to demons, she went home and changed her dress; and thus that vision became an occasion of humility both to her and all the other women.

Novice.—If the demons, who incite us miserable men to sin, are so numerous, I think too that the number of those who drag the compliant to punishment will also be great.

Monk.—I will instruct you concerning this rather by examples than by teaching.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of a priest of Ditkirch, who on his deathbed saw a vast number of demons.

At a convent of nuns of Ditkirch, which is situated in the township of Bonn, there died lately a priest named Adolphus, a man both worldly and wanton, the vicar of this convent. A priest, who had been a canon of Bonn, told me that one day this Adolphus was playing dice with a relation of his, when one of his parishioners came to him in great distress, and besought him, humbly and with tears, to be good enough to come and hear the confession of his mother, and give her the communion. When the priest replied: "I will not come till I have finished my game," and the other pressed him, saying that the sick woman could not wait, the priest grew angry and said to the partner of his game: "Kinsman, I make my complaint to you of this gentleman who will not leave me in peace." Seeing that he could gain nothing, the other went away, deeply grieving, and the sick woman died, without confession and without viaticum. Three days later, he, who had been playing with the priest, met the son of the dead woman, and remembering the priest's complaint, killed him without other cause.

After these and very many other sins, the priest himself fell into mortal sickness; and as he lay on his bed in despair, a kinswoman of his who was sitting beside him, being unable to see any sign of contrition in him, said sadly: "Sir, you are very weak, prepare yourself to meet God; call upon Him that He may forgive you your sins, and grant you time for fruitful repentance." But he answered, despairing: "Do you see that great barn opposite to us? There are under its roof as many blades of straw as there are demons now gathered round me." And when he had said this, he fell into his agony and died, seeing at his death the presence of those by whose advice he had lived when in health. I could tell you much more about the number of demons, but I am reserving it till the twelfth book.

Novice.—Since the wicked have many demons to incite them to their evil way of life, and many to accuse them in death, I am wondering if each torturer will have as many to assist him in their punishment.

Monk.—In the thirty-second chapter of the first book, it was said of the abbot of Morimund that demons carried his soul to the place of punishment and there tortured him. Again in the sixth chapter of the second book, the murderer Hildebrand, when he appeared to Bertolphus, said that many thousands of demons were waiting outside for his soul.

Novice.—If this be so, assuredly there must be many more demons than wicked men.

Monk.—With regard to the present time, we have no means of answering this question, but we are sure that in the end of the world, when the number of the reprobate shall be complete, there will be far more wicked men than demons.

Novice.—How is this proved?

Monk.—The tenth part of the angels fell and became demons; now the blessed Gregory tells us that as many elect will rise to heaven as there are angels remaining there. In accordance with this, the number of the elect will be nine times as great as the number of demons. But who can doubt that there are incomparably more wicked men than good? Nor may the wicked take any comfort from the fact that they will be far more numerous than the demons; for so great is the natural power of the latter, so concentrated their malice, so intense their love of inflicting pain, that one will be enough to torture many thousands of men. Let this be enough as to the vast number of evil spirits. But how surpassingly wicked they are, and how pitiless, I will show you by several examples.

CHAPTER IX.

Of a demon who said that he would rather go down to hell with one soul deceived by himself than be restored to heaven.

While a demon was cruelly torturing a man whom he had obsessed, and by chattering through his mouth was giving various answers to various enquiries, one of the bystanders asked: "Tell us, devil, what price in toil would you be willing to pay that you might return to the glory in which you once lived?" The demon answered: "If I had the power of decision, I would rather go down to hell with one soul whom I had myself deceived, than go back to heaven." All, who heard it, wondered at his answer, but he went on: "Why do you wonder at this? so great is my malice, and so intent upon it am I, that I can never desire anything that is good." But this does not agree with what was said by another demon.

CHAPTER X.

Of another demon who said the contrary.

In the church of the blessed Peter at Cologne, while a woman was being miserably tormented by a demon that possessed her, it happened that another woman, also possessed, came into her presence. Immediately they began to attack each other, vieing in outcries and insults, so as to astonish us all. Demon said to demon: "Miserable that we are, why by consenting to Lucifer did we fall for ever from eternal glory?" The other asked: "Why then did you do it?" And when the first still uttered words that almost sounded like repentance, the other said: "Be silent, this repentance comes far too late; never can you go back." Do you see how

great is their obſtinacy? The same evil spirit, when asked, like the one in the laſt ſtory, about the return to glory, answered very differently, as I heard myself: "If," he said, "there were a column of burning iron set up from earth to heaven, and if it were furnished with the sharpeſt razors and blades of ſteel, and if I were given a body capable of suffering, moſt gladly would I drag myself up it from now till the Day of Judgment, now climbing up a little and now slipping down again, if only I might at the laſt win home to the glory in which once I dwelt."

Novice.—How do you explain these different sentiments?

Monk.—The firſt demon knew well that the proposal suggeſted to him was altogether impossible, and simply made a show of his own malice; the other declared, in what words he could, his knowledge of the greatness of his loss.

Novice.—Do demons fear the punishment prepared for them?

Monk.—They believe and tremble. Hence it is that all forms of exorcism, which are carried out to weaken their malice, conclude with the mention of fire and the Laſt Judgment. How eager they are to injure men I will show you by examples.

CHAPTER XI.

Of a demon who confessed that he had taken possession of a woman because she had been handed over to him by her husband.

Laſt year our abbot was celebrating mass at S. Saviour's Mount, near Aix, and at the end of the service a woman possessed of a devil was brought to him. He read over her the gospel for Ascension Day, and at the words: *they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover* (Mark xvi. 17), he placed his hand upon her head; whereupon the demon

uttered so lamentable a cry, that we were all terrified. When adjured to go out of her, he answered: "It is not yet the will of the Most High." When asked how he had entered her, he did not reply himself, nor suffer the woman to answer. Later she confessed that her husband had said to her in anger: "Go to the devil," and at that moment she had felt him enter through one of her ears. This woman was a native of the province of Aix, and well known in the district.

CHAPTER XII.

Also of a boy whom the devil seized upon when his father said to him, "Go to the devil."

A certain abbot once told me of a man, who in a fit of anger told his son to go to the devil; and immediately the devil seized the lad and carried him off, so that he was no more seen.

Novice.—Why is a son punished for the sins of the father, when the Scripture says: *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father* (Ez. xviii. 20).

Monk.—I say exactly what the woman in the preceding story said.[1] It may have been that God permitted it to happen for the sake of example, that when men hear of the torture of the husband in his wife's obsession, and the grief of the father in the loss of his son, they may restrain their anger and keep their tongues from foolish speech.

Novice.—What you say is a help to me.

Monk.—Let those who doubt the existence of demons wait till they see demoniacs, for in them the signs of his presence are clearly shown, in the way that the devil speaks through their mouths and rages most cruelly in their bodies.

Novice.—But this may not always be genuine, sometimes it is mere pretence.

[1] Apparently there is some lacuna in C. XI.

Monk.—Demoniacs are often spoken of in the gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles, as well as in the Lives or Sufferings of the Saints. I do not deny indeed that some have pretended to be possessed for the sake of worldly gain, but in many cases there is no pretence, as will be shown by the following example.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of a possessed woman who said that the devil was bound by three words of the canon.

Gerard, the provost of Ober-Pleis told me that a possessed woman, very well known to many, came to Siegburg to be cured. She was taken into the church of S. Michael the Archangel, and was questioned on various subjects, and when the binding of Lucifer in hell was mentioned, the devil replied by her mouth: "O fools, do you imagine that my master is bound in hell with any chains of iron? Very different is the reality. Three words of the mass have been laid in silence upon him, and with these he is bound." Some of the brethren asked: "What are these three words?" but she was unwilling, or rather afraid, to speak them, only saying: "Bring me the book, and I will show them to you." The missal was brought and handed to her closed; she opened it and found the canon without any difficulty and putting her finger upon the place: *Through Him, and with Him and in Him,* in which a memorial is made of the Supreme Trinity, she said: "Behold these are the three words with which my master is bound." Several of the monks present heard this, and knowing that the woman could not read, they were much edified, for they understood the force of the words. For by the Father, and with the Son and in the Holy Spirit, whose works are indivisible, is that *strong man bound, and his goods are spoiled* (Mark iii. 7).

CHAPTER XIV.

Of a possessed woman, who in the Isle of S. Nicholas, acknowledged the relics.

This year on the feaſt of All Saints, I was with my prior in the Isle of S. Nicholas, commonly called Stupa, which is a convent of nuns, and there we saw a girl, who, before our coming, had been possessed, but at that time had been set free by the virtue of their relics and by the prayers of the siſters. About her we were told by the Superior of the convent, a spiritually-minded woman, that one day, when she was being cruelly torn by the unclean spirit, a certain worthy clerk, wishing to make trial of her, took from its golden table, without her knowledge, the little bag containing some thorns from the Lord's crown, and holding it in his closed hand over the head of the Demoniac, drew from her piercing outcries. The byſtanders, not knowing the cause of her fury asked her why she was thus crying out, and what was the matter with her; and she answered: "That which once reſted upon the head of the Moſt High, even that is now weighing down my head and piercing it with ſtabs; and do you ask me why I cry out?" Those present were greatly edified, especially the siſters, because they had an unmiſtakable proof of two things, namely that the thorns were genuine, and that the woman was undoubtedly possessed by the devil.

Moreover if these two examples are not enough for you, call to mind those three demons in the firſt, second and third chapters of the third book.

CHAPTER XV.

How demons are in men.

Novice.—Although I am quite satisfied about these things, there is ſtill one point that troubles me. Some say that demons are not within men, but outside them, as a caſtle is

said to be besieged not from within, but from without. Others think the contrary, relying on those words of the Saviour: *Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit* (Mark v. 8).

Monk.—A thing cannot properly be said to come out, unless it was within; yet both say truth in a way, namely that it is possible to be within a man, and yet not within him. It is not possible for the devil to be within the human soul, according to what is laid down by Gennadius in his book *Dogmas of the Church,* where he says: "We do not believe that by any energy or operation a demon can pass in substance into the soul, but that it can be united to it by contact and pressure. To pass into the soul is only possible for the Creator, because His substance is incorporeal by nature, and so is adapted to enter His own creation. Nothing akin to substance can fill the soul of man except the Trinity who created him."

Novice.—How then is the devil said to enter, to tempt or to inspire the heart of man?

Monk.—He enters, fills or inspires only so far as he draws the soul to a desire for evil by deceiving it. And here is the difference between the approach of the Holy Spirit and that of a wicked spirit, that the Holy Spirit is properly said to pass into the soul, and the other to inspire it. The Holy Spirit dwelling within the sinful soul in His essence, power and wisdom, passes into it by grace as if from near at hand. But the evil spirit, being outside it in substance as we have shown, shoots in its wickedness like an arrow, by suggesting evil and fashioning the mind to vice. Whence you have the *Sending evil angels among them* (Ps. lxxviii. 49). And from this it ensues, that after the coming of the Holy Spirit, a man is able to love good more fervently than formerly he loved evil, which was implanted as it were from a distance. When the devil is said to be within a man, this must not be understood of the soul, but of the body, because he is able to pass into its empty cavities such as the bowels.

Novice.—I am satisfied now on this point, but I should like to ask if there be still any other ways in which demons are wont to injure men.

Monk.—Demons have a thousand arts of injury, four of which I will lay before you. Some they injure by false promises, others by undermining their faith, some by afflicting them in the body, and others, and this is worst of all, by slaying them with sin. But none of these things can happen except by the just judgment of God, and I will subjoin examples of each.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of a lay-brother of Kloster-Camp, who was deceived by the promise of the bishopric of Halberstadt, and was hanged.

This story I heard from a priest of our Order, a reliable witness, who knew the whole affair. In Kloster-Camp, a house of the Cistercian Order, which lies in the diocese of Cologne, there was a certain lay-brother who had learnt from the monks, with whom he associated, just as much letters as enabled him to read. This good fortune was a great delight to him, but it became the means of his undoing ; for he secretly caused books to be written for him, that he might possess them, and began to take pleasure in the vice of private ownership. Then when these studies were forbidden him, because he was too much absorbed in them, his love of learning brought him to apostasy ; but he made little progress, because he was already too old. He returned to the monastery in repentance, but repeated this act of apostasy a second, and even a third time ; going to secular schools, and then coming back again, he thus provided copious material for the devil to work upon in deceiving him.

One day he appeared visibly to the lay-brother in the form of an angel and said : " Go on learning with all your might, because God has decreed, and it shall surely come to pass, that you shall be bishop of Halberstadt." The poor fool did not

discern the wiles of the devil, but hoped that the ancient miracles were to be revived in him. What followed? A little later, the deceiver came to him, and with a smiling face said very distinctly: "To-day the bishop of Halberstadt has died; hasten at once to the city whose bishop God has destined you to be, for His counsel may not be changed." Forthwith the wretched man left the monastery stealthily, and was entertained that night in the house of a worthy priest near the town of Xanten. But that he might come to his see with becoming dignity, he rose up before dawn, saddled a fine horse belonging to his host, borrowed his cloak, mounted and rode off. In the morning the servants of the house, discovering their loss, pursued after the apostate and arrested him; he was taken before the tribunal and charged with the theft, and being found guilty, ascended, not the throne as a bishop, but the gallows as a convicted thief. You see to what kind of end the devil's promises lead! Another lay-brother was deceived by him, not indeed so grossly, but none the less dangerously.

CHAPTER XVII.

Also of a lay-brother who was deceived by the call of a cuckoo, and died in apostasy.

Theobald of blessed memory, the abbot of Eberbach, told us last year how a certain lay-brother, when on a journey, heard the frequent call of the bird, which gets its name of cuckoo from its note, and counted the number of times it was repeated; finding this to be twenty-two, he took it for an omen, and reckoned that his life would be prolonged for as many more years. "Ho, ho!" he cried, "now for certain I have twenty-two years more to live; why should I mortify myself in the Order all that time? I will go back to the world, give myself up to it, and enjoy all its pleasures for twenty

years, and then the last two that remain I will spend in penitence." There is no doubt that the devil, who by open speech had induced the lay-brother of the last story to believe that he would become a bishop, now by secret suggestion persuaded this brother to believe in such an augury. But the Lord, to whom all auguries are hateful, disposed quite differently to his calculations ; for He allowed him to live in the world for those two poor years that he had appointed for penitence, and by a just judgment took from him the twenty that he had assigned to pleasure. See of what value are the devil's promises ! The following example will show you how, through his servants, he overthrows the faith of some, or rather of very many.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of two heretics, who, after deceiving many people by pretended miracles at Besançon, were burnt at the stake.

Two men, simple in dress, but not in heart, ravening wolves rather than sheep, came to Besançon, pretending the deepest piety. They were pale and wasted, they walked barefoot, they fasted every day ; never were they absent from solemn matins in the cathedral, nor would they accept from anyone more than the most meagre food. When by such hypocrisy they had gained the goodwill of all the people, then and not till then, they began to pour forth their hidden poison, and to preach new and unheard of heresies to the unlettered folk.

That the people might put faith in their teaching, they bade them sprinkle flour over the pavement, and walked over it without leaving any trace of a footstep ; in like manner they walked upon water without sinking, and lastly, caused wooden huts to be set on fire over their heads, and

when these had been reduced to ashes, they came forth uninjured. Then they said to the crowds: "If you do not believe us for our words, at leaſt believe us for our miracles."

Both the bishop and the vicar heard of these things and were sorely troubled; but when they tried to reſiſt the men, and affirmed that they were heretics, deceivers, and servants of the devil, the people were so angered againſt them, that it was with difficulty that they escaped from being ſtoned to death.

This bishop was a good and learned man, and a native of our province; he was well known to our elder monk Conrad who told me this ſtory, and who was himself in the city at the time. When the bishop saw that he could effect nothing by words, and that the people committed to his charge were having their faith deſtroyed by these miniſters of the devil, he sent for a clerk whom he knew to be an expert in necromancy, and said to him: "Thus and thus are these men doing in my city; I beg you to use your art to find out from the devil, who they are, and from whence they come, and by what power these great and ſtupendous miracles are being wrought; for it is not possible it can be by the power of God, since their doctrine is plainly opposed by him." The clerk said: "Sir, I have renounced all those arts for a long time"; but the bishop replied: "You see well the ſtraits I am in. I muſt either agree with their teaching or be ſtoned by the people. I lay it upon you as a satisfaction for your sins, that you consent to do this for me." In obedience to his bishop, the clerk called up the devil, and when asked the reason of this summons, said: "I am very sorry that I ever forsook you, and as I intend for the future to be more your servant than ever, I beg you to tell me who these men are, what is their teaching, and by what power they work so great wonders?" The devil replied: "They are my servants and are sent by me; and they preach what I have put in their mouths." Then the clerk asked: "How is it that they cannot be injured? neither drowned in water, nor burnt with fire?" The devil answered "The indentures under which they have become my vassals, have been sewn under their armpits juſt under the skin; and it is by

this charm that they perform their miracles, and are immune from all bodily harm." Then the clerk said: "What would happen if these were taken from them?" and the devil replied: "In that case they would become weak like other men." When the clerk heard this, he thanked the devil and asked him to leave him for that time, and to come back when he next summoned him. Then he returned to the bishop, and recounted all this to him in order; and he, greatly rejoicing, convened all the inhabitants of the town into a place suitable for the purpose, and said: "I am your pastor, you are my sheep. If these men confirm their doctrines by miracles, as you say they do, I am willing to follow them with you; but if not, it is right that they should be punished, and that you should return in penitence with me to the faith of your fathers." Then all the people cried out: "We have seen many miracles wrought by them already"; but the bishop answered: "I have not seen any yet." Why make a long story? The plan pleased the people, the heretics were summoned into the bishop's presence, and a great fire was kindled in the midst of the town.

Before they entered it, however, they were brought secretly to the bishop, who said to them: "I wish to assure myself that you have no charms upon you." When they heard this, immediately they stripped off their clothes, and said very confidently: "Search diligently both on our bodies and in our clothes." Whereupon the soldiers, as they had been instructed beforehand by the bishop, lifted up their arms, and discovering certain scars hidden beneath them, cut them open with their knives, and drew out from thence the indentures which had been sewn up in them. When these had been handed to the bishop, he went out to the people, taking the heretics with him, and when silence was secured, cried out in a loud voice: "Now let your prophets enter the fire, and if it does not injure them, I will believe them." The wretched men were panic-stricken, and protested that they could not enter now; then the bishop told the whole story, and disclosed their malice, and showed the indentures.

At this, fury came upon all, and they hurled the servants of the devil into the fire prepared for them, that they might

go to be tormented with the devil in fire eternal. Thus by the grace of God, and by the energy of the bishop, the heresy was extinguished in its infancy, and the people who had been corrupted and led astray were cleansed through penitence.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the heretics burnt at Cologne.

About the same time several heretics were arrested at Cologne under archbishop Rheinbold, and after being examined and convicted by learned men, were condemned by the secular tribunal. Sentence was passed, and they were about to be led out to the stake, when one of them, by name Arnold, whom the rest acknowledged as their leader, begged, as was said by those present, that he might be given some bread and a bowl of water. Some thought that this request should be granted, but others who were wiser dissuaded them, saying that with these some diabolical charm might be wrought which would be a stumbling-block and perhaps ruin for the weak.

Novice.—I cannot think what he can have wished to do with bread and water.

Monk.—From the words of another heretic, who was arrested and burnt three years ago by the king of Spain, I think that he wished to use them for a sacriligious communion, which would be a viaticum for his disciples to eternal damnation. For a Spanish abbot of our Order, who had been one of the bishops and prelates of the church who had condemned the errors of this heretic, told us, when passing our way, that part of his teaching was, that any rustic could make the Body of Christ at his own table out of the bread that he was eating ; this accursed heretic was a blacksmith.

Novice.—How then did it fare with the heretics of Cologne?

Monk.—They were taken outside the town, and were together put into the fire near the Jewish cemetery. After the flames had taken strong hold of them, in the sight and hearing of a great crowd, Arnold placed his hand on the heads of his dying disciples, and exhorted them: "Stand fast in your faith, for this day you shall be with Laurence," and yet they were very far from the faith of Laurence. There was a maiden among them, beautiful though a heretic, and she was drawn from the fire by the compassion of some who promised that they would provide her with a husband, or if it seemed better, would place her in a nunnery. She consented to this in words, but when the heretics were now dead, she said to those who had charge of her: "Tell me, where does that seducer lie?" and when they pointed out to her where Master Arnold lay, she slipped from their hands, veiled her face with her robe, and threw herself upon the body of the dead man, and with him went down to burn for ever in hell.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the Waldensian heresy in the city of Metz.

A few years ago, under the learned bishop Bertram, the Waldensian heresy sprang up in the city of Metz in the following way. On a certain feast the bishop was preaching to the people in the cathedral, when he saw two of the devil's servants standing in the crowd and cried: "I see the devil's messengers among you. See, there are the men," pointing to them with his finger, "who in my presence were condemned at Montpellier and cast out of the city for their heresies." They replied bodly to the bishop, and they had in their company a scholar, who barked at him like a dog attacking him with every kind of insult. When they left the church, they gathered a crowd round them, and preached

their errors to them. Some of the clerks present said to them: "Sirs, does not the Apoſtle say, *How ſhall they preach, except they be ſent* (Rom. x. 15)? We should like to know who sent you hither to preach," and they replied: "The Holy Spirit." Now the bishop was unable to use force againſt them, owing to certain powerful citizens, who befriended them in hatred of the bishop, because he had expelled from the church a certain dead usurer, their relative. In truth they had been sent out by the spirit of error, and by their preaching the Waldensian heresy was planted in that city, and to this day is not wholly extinguished.

Novice.—Alas! that there should be even to-day so many heresies in the church.

Monk.—They are the fruit of the fury and malice of the devil.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the heresy of the Albigenses.

In the time of pope Innocent, the predecessor of the present pope, Honorius, during the ſtrife between Philip and Otto, the rival kings of the Romans, the envy of the devil caused the Albigensian heresy to sprout forth, or to speak more ſtrictly, to ripen. So great was its ſtrength, that all the wheat of the faith of that nation seemed changed into the tares of error. Abbots of our Order with certain bishops were despatched to root up the tares with the harrow of Catholic teaching; but by the resiſtance of the enemy who had sown those tares, they had little success.

Novice.—What was their error?

Monk.—Their leaders had collected some points from the Manichaean dogma, and some of the errors which Origen is said to have written againſt Periarchon, and very many which they had fashioned out of their own heads. They

follow Manichaeus in believing that there are two sources of life, a good God and a wicked God, i.e. the devil ; and they say that the wicked God created all bodies, and the good God all souls.

Novice.—Moses makes it certain that God created both soul and body, when he says : *The Lord God formed man,* i.e. the body, *of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life* (Gen. ii. 7) i.e. the soul.

Monk.—If they received Moses and the prophets, there would be no heretics. They deny the resurrection of the body ; they mock at any benefit coming to the dead from the living ; they say that there is no profit in going to church, or in praying there ; and in these things they are worse than Jews or Pagans, who believe them all. They have repudiated baptism, and blaspheme the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Novice.—Why do they endure such severe persecutions from the faithful, if they expect no recompense for them in the future?

Monk.—They say that they look forward to the glory of the spirit. One of the aforesaid abbots, who was a monk, seeing a certain knight sitting on a horse and talking to his ploughman, and thinking him to be a heretic, as indeed he was, drew near to him and asked : " Will you tell me, good Sir, whose field this is? " and when the other answered that it was his, he continued : " And what do you do with its fruits? " " Both my family," he said, " and I live upon them, and I bestow some part of them upon the poor." When the monk went on : " What advantage do you hope to gain from such alms? " the knight made this reply : " That my spirit may walk in glory after death." The monk asked, " Where will it go? " and the knight said : " In accordance with its merit. If it has lived a good life, and won this reward from God, it will, when it leaves my body, enter into that of some future prince or king, or of some other illustrious personage, in which it will find happiness ; or if it has lived ill, it will enter the body of someone both poor and wretched, in which it will find suffering." The fool believed, as the other Albigenses do, that, in accordance with

its merit, the soul will pass through different bodies, even those of animals and reptiles.

Novice.—What a foul heresy !

Monk.—The errors of the Albigenses spread to such an extent that in a short time it had infected more than a thousand towns, and if it had not been cut back by the swords of the faithful, I think it would have corrupted the whole of Europe. In the year of our Lord 1210, a crusade was preached against the Albigenses throughout Germany and France, and in the following year there arose against them from Germany, Leopold, Duke of Austria, Engilbert, then provost, and afterwards archbishop of Cologne, and his brother Adolphus, Count of Altenberg, William, Count of Julich, and many others of all ranks and dignities. The same thing took place in France, Normandy and Poitou ; and the preacher and leader of them all was Arnold, abbot of Citeaux, afterwards bishop of Narbonne.

When they came to the great city of Beziers ; which is said to have contained more than a hundred thousand men, they laid siege to it ; and in the sight of them all the heretics defiled in an unspeakable manner the book of the sacred gospel, and then cast it from the wall towards the Christians, and sending arrows after it, cried : " There is your law, miserable wretches ! " But Christ, the author of the gospel, did not suffer such an insult to be hurled at Him unavenged. For some of His followers, burning with zeal for the faith, placed ladders against the wall, and like lions, after the example of those of whom we read in the book of the Maccabees (2 Macc. xi. 11), fearlessly climbed the walls, and while the heretics were stricken with panic from on high and fled, they opened the gates to the others, and so gained possession of the city.

When they discovered, from the admissions of some of them, that there were Catholics mingled with the heretics, they said to the abbot, " Sir, what shall we do, for we cannot distinguish between the faithful and the heretics." The abbot, like the others, was afraid that many, in fear of death, would pretend to be Catholics, and after their departure, would return to their heresy, and is said to have replied :

" Kill them all ; for the Lord knoweth them that are His (2 Tim. ii. 19) ! " and so countless numbers in that town were slain.

By the Divine favour, they also gained possession of another large town, near Toulouse, called The Beautiful Valley, from its position. When the people there were examined, and all the reſt had professed themselves willing to return to the faith, there remained four hundred and fifty, whom the devil hardened in their obſtinacy ; and of these four hundred were burnt at the ſtake, and the others hanged on the gallows. The same thing took place in the other cities and forts, the wretched folk often giving themselves up to death of their own accord. When the people of Toulouse were brought into the same ſtraits, they promised all satisfaction, but not honeſtly as was afterwards clear. For the treacherous count of S. Egidius, the prince and leader of all the heretics, after surrendering all his property in the Lateran Council, to wit, his lands and farms, his towns and caſtles, and after moſt of them had been occupied by right of war by the good Catholic, Simon de Montfort, betook himself to Toulouse, from which city he ſtill harasses and attacks the faithful even to this day.

It was only this year that Dom Conrad, cardinal bishop of Porto, who was sent as legate againſt the Albigenses, wrote to the chapter of Citeaux that one of the Toulousan nobles had perpetrated so horrible a crime in hatred of Chriſt and in an attempt to bring confusion upon our faith, that it ought assuredly to anger even the very enemies of Chriſt themselves. He had committed an abominable and disguſting outrage by the high altar of the cathedral, and others, heaping madness upon madness, insulted the Crucifix upon the altar with indescribable villainy ; and after this they dragged down the sacred image itself, and cut off the arms, showing themselves far worse than the soldiers of Herod, who spared the dead Saviour, and would not break His legs.

Novice.—Who would not ſtand stupified before the amazing patience of God !

Monk.—For the Lord is long suffering, but He will in no wise let thee go (Ecclus v. 4). He, who punished so terribly in the neck and throat the people of Damietta, because after

their victory they had tied a rope round the neck of a crucifix and dragged it through the streets, will by no means clear such blasphemers as these. Before the hosts of the Lord came against the Albigenses, as we have related above, they had invited Miralimomelinus, the king of Morocco, to come to their help ; and he crossed over from Africa into Spain with so incredible a host that he looked to overrun the whole of Europe. He even sent a message to pope Innocent that he intended to stable his horses in the portico of S. Peter's, and to plant his standard on the church. This indeed was partly carried out, though not at all in the way he had intended. For because God abases the proud, at that very time, in the year of grace 1212, on the 16th day of July, 40,000 fighting men of his army were slain ; while he himself fled to Seville, and died there of grief. His principal standard was captured in the fight, and sent to Innocent, who set it up in S. Peter's to the glory of Christ.

Let this be enough about the Albigenses.

Novice.—If there had been learned men among these heretics, perhaps they would not have strayed so far.

Monk.—When learned men begin to fall into error, they are driven by the devil to display even greater and more grievous folly than the illiterate.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the heretics burned at Paris.

At the same time as this outbreak of the Albigensian heresy, it happened in the city of Paris, which is the fountain of all knowledge and the well of the Holy Scriptures, that the persuasion of the devil instilled a strange perversity of intellect into several learned men. These were their names: Master William of Poitou, a subdeacon who had read the classics in Paris and had studied theology there for three

years, Bernard, a subdeacon, William, a goldsmith, who was their prophet, Stephen, a priest of Corbeil, Stephen, a priest of Chelles, John, a priest of Uncinis ; all of them theological students except Bernard ; Dudo, the private secretary of Master Almeric, a priest, Elmand, an acolyte, Odo, a deacon, Master Garinus, who had come to Paris for the classics, and who, as a priest, had studied theology under Master Stephen, archbishop of Canterbury ; Ulrich, a priest of Liré, who was more than sixty years old, and had been a student of theology for a long time, Peter of S. Clodowald, another sexagenarian priest and theological student, and Stephen, a deacon of Old Corbeil. At the instigation of the devil these men had elaborated many heresies, and had already preached them in many places.

Novice.—What were the main points on which these men of ripe age and learning fell into error?

Monk.—They said that the Body of Christ was in the Bread of the altar only in the same way as it was in all bread and in eveything ; and that God had spoken through Ovid just in the same way as through Augustine. They denied the resurrection of the body, saying that there was no Paradise nor hell, but that he had Paradise within himself who possessed the knowledge of God, as they did, while he who was in mortal sin had hell within himself just as a man has a rotten tooth in his mouth. They said it was idolatry to set up altars to the saints, or to burn incense before the sacred images, and that he who kissed the bones of the martyrs did it with his tongue in his cheek. But the worst blasphemy that they dared to utter was against the Holy Spirit, from Whom is derived all purity and holiness. They said that if anyone were in the Spirit, even if he were to commit fornication or be polluted with any other defilement, yet there would be no sin in him, because that Spirit, who is God, being altogether separate from the flesh, cannot sin, and the man, who is nothing, cannot sin, so long as that Spirit, who is God, is in him ; for *it is the same God that worketh all in all* (1 Cor. xii. 6). From whence they admitted that each one of them was both Christ and the Holy Spirit ; and in them was fulfilled that saying of the gospel: *False Christs*

and false prophets shall arise etc. (Matt. xxiv. 24). These moſt unhappy men had utterly worthless arguments of their own with which they ſtrove to support their errors. Their perfidy was discovered in the following way. The above mentioned William the goldsmith went to Maſter Rudolph of Nemours saying that he had been sent by the Lord, and laying before him the ensuing articles of unbelief: "The Father has operated in the Old Teſtament under certain forms, namely, those of the Law; in a similar way, the Son under certain forms, such as the Sacrament of the Altar, baptism and so forth. As the forms of the Law fell at the firſt coming of Chriſt, so now all the forms, under which the Son has worked, will fall and the Sacraments come to an end, because the Person of the Holy Spirit will clearly declare Himself in those in whom He has been incarnated, and chiefly will He speak by seven men, one of whom will be William himself." Also he prophesied that within five years these four great plagues muſt come: the firſt upon the people, who will be consumed by famine; the second will be the sword, by which the kings will slay each other; in the third the earth will open and swallow up the townsfolk; and in the fourth fire will come down from heaven upon the prelates of the church, who are the members of Antichriſt. For he said that the pope was Antichriſt, and Rome was Babylon; for the pope sits upon Mount Olivet, i.e. in the plenitude of power. Now already thirteen years have passed, and yet none of these things have happened, which the false prophet foretold muſt come to pass within five years. Further, that he might win the favour of Philip of France, he added this: "All the kingdoms of the earth will be subject to the king of the Franks and to his son, who will live under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit and will never die; and there will be given to the king of France twelve loaves, i.e. the knowledge and power of the Scriptures."

When he heard this, Maſter Rudolph asked him if he had any associates to whom these things had been revealed. When he replied that he had many, and gave the names we have mentioned above, this prudent man, considering the danger that hung over the church, and that he alone could

not investigate their wickedness or convict them, practised a certain dissimulation, and said that he had received a revelation from the Holy Spirit concerning a certain priest who was to aid him in preaching their doctrine. Then that he might keep his reputation unsullied, he told the whole story to the abbot of S. Victor, and to Master Robert and to Brother Thomas, and went with them to the bishop of Paris, and to three masters learned in theology, namely the dean of Salzburg, Master Robert of Kortui, and Master Stephen, and told everything to them. They were greatly terrified, ordered Rudolph and the priest, on pain of damnation, to pretend to be in sympathy with these men, until they had heard all their teaching, and had fully explored all the articles of their unbelief. Whereupon, to carry out this design, Master Rudolph and his ally joined the heretics in their missionary journey of three months round the dioceses of Paris, Lyons and Troyes, and the archepiscopate of Sens, and found out, as far as possible, all those that adhered to their sect.

In order to gain more fully the confidence of the heretics, Master Rudolph used to put on a rapt expression, and pretend that he had been caught up to heaven in the spirit, and in their conventicles afterwards would relate to them what he said he had seen, and promise that he would publicly preach their faith unceasingly. At last he went back to the bishop, and told him what they had seen and heard. Then the bishop sent throughout the province to summon them all, for none were in the city except Bernard ; and when they were in safe custody, he convened the neighbouring bishops and masters of theology to examine them ; the aforesaid articles were laid before them, which some of them upheld in the presence of all, and others, while willing to withdraw and recognising that they had been wrong, yet stood firm with the rest in the same obstinacy, and refused to recant.

After this display of hopeless perversity, they were taken, by the advice of the bishop to the Campus, and there, in the presence of all the clergy and people, degraded from their sacred offices, and on the return of the king, for he happened to be absent at that time, they were burnt at the stake. Of so obstinate a mind did they show themselves, that they

would give no reply to any questions, nor would they vouchsafe any sign of penitence, even in the agony of death. When they were taken out to punishment, there arose so mighty a tempest, that no one doubted that it had been raised by those who had instilled these mortal errors into dying men.

That night he who had been held their leader knocked at the door of a certain recluse, and too late confessed his error, telling her that he held an important place in hell, and was doomed to eternal fires. Four of them had been examined but were not burnt ; to wit, Master Garinus, the priest Ulrich, and the deacon Stephen : these were all sent to prison for life ; but Peter, before he was arrested, took fright and became a monk. The body of Almeric, who had been the leader of this wickedness, was cast out of the cemetery, and buried in the open field. At the same time it was enjoined in Paris that no one should read any books on physical science for the next three years ; and a perpetual ban was laid upon the books of Master David and the *Gallic books of theology,* and they were publicly burnt ; and thus by the grace of God, this heresy was rooted out in its beginning.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of a heretic burnt at Troyes, who claimed to be the Holy Spirit.

It is scarecely two years ago that a man at Troyes, being full of the devil, gave out publicly that he was the Holy Spirit ; but the people inflamed with rage by such madness, put him into a wicker cage, piled fuel around it, and burnt him to ashes.

Novice.—Surely the life of such men must be very execrable, when their doctrines are so foul?

Monk.—That you may the more detest all heretical sects, I will add an example of their way of life.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the heretics of Verona.

During the days of the Emperor Frederick, when the pope Lucius was making a ſtay in Verona, a city of Lombardy, and many prelates of the church and princes of the empire were gathered there, our fellow monk, Gotteschalk, who was then canon of Cologne Cathedral, was also ſtaying there with his brother Everard, a canon of S. Gereon. This laſt noticed that their hoſt left the house every night, taking with him his wife and daughter, and when Everard asked one of them whither they went and what they did, the answer was: "Come and see." So he went with them to a large hall underground, where many of both sexes were congregated, and in general silence a heretic leader pronounced a sermon full of blasphemies, in which he inſtructed them in life and morals. Then the lights were put out, and there ensued such scenes as were slanderously alleged by the heathen againſt the Chriſtians in the early days of the Church. After he had been attending these meetings for some six months, the leader one night in the presence of all suggeſted that so regular an adherent as Everard had shown himself should now take the position of a teacher. This frightened him, and he went no more, and afterwards told his brother that he had frequented the conventicles of the heretics not for the sake of the teaching but for the opportunity of sin. See then under what laws they live, and what lives they lead. Nor is this to be wondered at, since they believe neither in the resurrection, nor in hell, nor in any punishment of the wicked; and therefore think that they can do what they please with impunity.

Novice.—I have heard that there are many heretics in Lombardy.

Monk.—This is only to be expected, since they have their teachers in every town, who openly read the sacred pages, and perversely expound them.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of a heretic who said that the devil was the ruler of this world because he had created it.

When king Otto set out for Rome to be crowned as Emperor, there went with him John, bishop of Cambrai, Henry, the scholasticus of S. Gereon, and Master Herman, canon of Bonn ; and the three went together to the school of a certain heretic teacher. They heard him read this passage : *Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out* (John xii. 31), and this was the way he expounded it : " Christ summoned the devil as prince of this world, because he had created it." Thereupon Herman disputed with him somewhat severely and proved to him, as he afterwards told me, not only from the Scriptures, but also from reason, that God had created all things, visible and invisible, material and spiritual, by the Word alone. Let this be enough about heretics, who are in truth limbs of the devil. But be sure of this, that the devil wreaks his malice much more cruelly upon heretics than upon the possessed.

Novice.— Can the possessed be in a state of grace?

Monk.—Yes ; for as has been said above, he does not occupy their souls, but their bodies.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of a girl into whom the devil entered when she was five years old.

A woman in Brisach was very cruelly tried by this calamity ; for the devil had entered into her when she was five years old, and this was the cause : One day when she was drinking milk, her father, in a temper, said to her : " I wish you

might eat the devil in your greediness ! " Immediately the child felt his presence and was harassed by him until she was grown up, and only this year was she set free from him by the merits of the apoſtles Peter and Paul, whose church she visited. Who dare say that a baptized child of five years old was not in a ſtate of grace? The very demon himself said about her: " When I have gone out, she will be exempt from all pains in purgatory after this life." The possessed are able to make their confessions, to pray, and to communicate ; but that God permits the demon to do bodily injury to some of them, I will show you by several examples.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the lay-brother Theodoric, who was carried by the devil from the city of Lubeck.

One of our lay-brothers, Theodoric of Soeſt, told me that when he was a young man, a friend of his promised to make love to a certain girl in Lubeck on his behalf. He gained the assent of the young woman, but when Theodoric hoped to win her, his friend showed that he had been making a mock of him, and had wooed her for himself. When Theodoric learnt of this he was very angry and cried: " The devil who brought me here will be able to take me away again." Immediately upon this invitation the devil appeared, picked up the man and lifted him into the air, and carrying him away from the town, set him down in an out of the way place by the shore of a certain lake, and then said to him : " If you had not in some fashion made the sign of the cross, I should have killed you juſt now "; for when he was carried off he had crossed himself, though very slightly and imperfectly. When let go by the demon, he fell so heavily that he lay senseless on the ground vomiting blood. At laſt, regaining a little of his ſtrength, he crawled on hands and knees to the water, washed

his face, and drank a little, and then with great toil, reached his lodging. When he entered the house, as soon as the light met his eyes, he fell again into a fainting fit. They summoned the priest, who read over him the first chapter of S. John's gospel, and fortified him against the attacks of the devil with prayer. For a whole year he suffered so much from trembling in all his limbs that he could not hold a cup in his hand to drink from it. He used to tell how when the devil carried him away and held him tightly in his arms, he could see the church of S. Nicholas and all the buildings of the city standing out clearly in the bright light of the moon. You have an almost similar story in the eleventh chapter of the third book, which tells of Henry, also a citizen of Soest, whom the devil snatched up from the market place at night, and after carrying him beyond the monastery of S. Patroclus, set him down in a field. So baleful and so poisonous is the nature of demons, that men are often injured by the mere sight of them.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of the lay-brother Albero, who fell sick at the sight of a demon.

When our lay-brother Albero was a novice, and had been sitting up in the hall one night with another lay-brother, because both were assailed with night terrors, just before the bell rang for matins, he took a turn round the cloister and saw in the distance near the lavatory something that looked like a human shadow. Thinking that it was our fellow monk Frederick, he wished to make signs to him to go back to bed; but remembering that this brother was feeble minded, he drew back again, in the fear that he might do him some injury. While he was thus hesitating, the shadow grew larger before his eyes until it reached the next storey of the building. Just

then the bell rang in the dormitory, and he went into the bakehouse, where the furnace had been lighted for baking the bread; and no sooner did his eyes fall upon the fire, which seemed to glow, as if only behind a sheet of glass, than sickness began to come over him. He went out at once and lay down under a tree, and for nearly eight days from that hour was so ill both in mind and body, that he could not eat or drink or sleep.

Novice.—I should like to know why it is, that when a man has seen a demon, the sight of a fire immediately afterwards should bring madness upon him.

Monk.—Fire is the producer of light, whereas the devil is the prince and creator of darkness. Light and darkness are as contrary to one another as heat and cold. If you pass from darkness into a blaze of sunlight, or vice versâ, your sight is immediately troubled and distressed by the sudden change. So too, if you bring your hand when frozen too near to the fire, or plunge it when burnt into cold water, the second element will give you even more pain than that caused by the first. What wonder then, if after the sight of the devil, who is, as I said, the author of darkness and of eternal fire, human nature is disturbed and terrified, is straitened and made faint, when it sees the light of this world, which is altogether the opposite to the light of hell. The latter breeds darkness, the former gives light. The two are utterly at variance, both in appearance and in effect. Yet perfect men, as has been said above, can often look upon demons without any terror and without any failing of the senses.

Novice.—If the sight of the devil in a form that he has assumed is so dangerous and harmful, who could bear to look upon him as he is.

Monk.—It is not possible for the eye of the body to see the devil as he is.

Novice.—Why?

Monk.—Because the devil is a spirit, and a spirit can only be seen by a spirit, as is the opinion of nearly all authorities. The souls of the reprobate see him in hell; and as it is the highest happiness of the elect to look upon God, so it is said to be the greatest punishment of the wicked to look upon the

devil. Would you like to hear of the peril of some who desired to see him in his own person?

Novice.—Indeed I greatly desire it; because the more horror and malice that I hear about him, so much the more shall I fear to sin.

Monk.—Listen then.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of the abbot of S. Agatha, and a monk and lay-brother of his who fainted away at the sight of the devil.

Twelve years ago, William, the abbot of S. Agatha, which is a Cistercian monastery in the diocese of Liège, was on his way to Eberbach, to which S. Agatha belongs, and when they reached Cologne, he said to his companions, one of his monks and a lay-brother named Adolphus: "It would be an act of mercy for us to go and see that possessed sister of the lay-brother of Eberbach, so that we may tell him how she fares."

They both agreed; and they went to the house where they found her sitting in the midst of many others. When the abbot put questions to her, she refused to answer a word, even when he asked if she would like to send any message to her brother, and remained dumb until he said: "I adjure you, by Him, whom I have this day handled in the mass, that you answer me." Then indeed the demon showed himself obedient and willing to reply through the woman's mouth; and seeing this his two companions begged the abbot to have the woman taken to an upper room that they might have conversation with her in private. This was done, and the abbot asked the demon several questions, and when he found he could get only lying answers, he again adjured him by the Most High to speak nothing but the truth. The demon promised this, and the abbot bade the monk and lay-brother to

withdraw to a little distance. Then he asked of the condition of the souls of some of those who had lately died both at Eberbach and at S. Agatha, and the devil gave such probable accounts of each one, although the woman had never seen them, that the abbot could have no further doubt of his truthfulness. Such and such, he said, were in glory, and others were still in purgatorial pains, and for these the abbot determined upon special prayers. He gave him also information about many other things so that the abbot marvelled greatly.

Later, the lay-brother begged that he might be allowed to speak with him privately, and when the abbot granted this, and withdrew a little way with the monk, the lay-brother said: "As my abbot has ordered you to give none but true answers, so do I urge you to tell me at once if you know anything against me, which would be hurtful to my soul." The devil replied: "I do know things; yesterday without your abbot's knowledge, you borrowed twelve denarii from such a woman at such a house in Utrecht, and you tied them up in a piece of rag, and hid them carefully in your bosom." Which indeed had been the fact; for this lay-brother, as he told me, had thought to himself in this wise: "If perchance your abbot should send you on some mission, you can use this money for your expenses." Then the lay-brother asked if he knew anything more; and when the demon replied: "I know you to be a thief," the other said: "I am not conscious of any theft since I came into the Order." Whereupon the devil said: "In the time of scarcity you gave to the poor money and other things which belonged to your monastery and not to you." When the lay-brother replied that he had never thought that such works of mercy could be a theft, the devil said: "According to my idea of truth, they are; because they were done without permission, nor have you at any time since then whispered them"; by *whispering* he meant confession. Immediately the lay-brother turned to the abbot, drew him aside into a private place, and humbly confessed all the things that the devil had thrown in his teeth, and undertook suitable penance. Then he returned to the obsessed woman and asked the devil if he still knew any sin against him, and now had won grace to hear: "So far as I know, I have nothing against

you now, because you have just now bent down your knees to whisper, and have thus taken all my previous knowledge from me."

Novice.—In this fact are clearly seen both the presence of the demon and the power of confession."

Monk.—We have said enough about these things in the book on Confession. After this the demon was adjured by the abbot to go out of the woman, and he replied: "Whither shall I go?" When the abbot said: "See, I open my mouth; enter it, if you can"; he answered: "I cannot enter, because this day the Most High has entered there." Then the abbot: "Climb up then upon these two fingers," holding up for him his thumb and forefinger. "I cannot do that," he said: "because they have this day handled the Most High"; for the abbot had said mass in the morning. When he still insisted that he should go out of her, the demon replied: "The Most High does not yet will it; for two years longer I shall dwell in her; after that time she will be delivered from me near the church of that James";[1] which indeed actually came to pass. Then the monk and the lay-brother besought the abbot that he would command the demon to show himself in his natural form. The abbot replied that he did not approve of this, and urged them to be satisfied with the orders he had already laid upon him; but when they persisted very obstinately, that this should be done, he was at last persuaded and said: "I order you by the power of Christ to show yourself to us in your natural form." When he replied, "Will you not go away till you have seen me?" and the abbot answered, "No," straightway the woman began to swell before their eyes and to rise up and up like a tower, and her eyes to flash and send out smoke like a furnace. At this sight the monk fell into a fainting fit, and the lay-brother became senseless, and unless the abbot, who was of stronger mould, had quickly ordered the demon to resume his former aspect, he would have fallen unconscious himself.

If you find difficulty in believing my words, go and ask them, for they are still, I believe, alive, and are truly religious men and will tell you nothing but the simple truth. But the

[1] S. James of Compostella.

demon obeyed the order, and when he had reduced the countenance of the woman to its former appearance, he said to the abbot: "Never in your life did you give so foolish a command; know for certain that if you had not to-day celebrated the Divine mysteries, none of you would ever have told to any man the things that I have now been showing you. Do you imagine that any man may look on me and live?"

The men who were waiting below heard a noise on the upper floor and came upstairs, and finding the monk and lay-brother unconscious, revived them with water, and carried them down. Then the demon said to the abbot: "Where are you going now?" and when the abbot had answered: "To Eberbach," he went on: "I too have been in Sueverbach and fared well enough there: ironically jesting on the name, for that was soon after the time that the lay-brothers revolted against the Order. So dreadful and so poisonous is the sight of demons that it not only makes healthy men sick, but sometimes even kills them.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of two young men who fell sick after seeing the devil in the shape of a woman.

Two young squires, one of whom was the page of the abbot of Prüm, who told me what I am about to relate, were exercising their horses after sunset on the eve of S. John Baptist, near the stream which flows past the monastery, when they saw on the other side of the stream what appeared to be a woman in a linen robe. Thinking that she was practising some magic, as some do on that particular night, they crossed the stream to arrest her. She girt up her robe and seemed to flee before them, while they pursued at full gallop; and when they found that their horses were exhausted without having been able to overtake the fugitive, whom they saw flitting

before them like a shadow, one of them said: "What in the world are we doing? it is a demon." Then they both made the sign of the cross and the portent vanished. From that hour both men and horses fell into a state of languor which lasted for so long, that it was only with difficulty that they escaped from death.

Novice.—I do not wonder at this in the case of the devil, when I read that a basilisk can kill men and birds and cattle who look upon it.

Monk.—This is why the devil is spoken of as a basilisk in the Psalm (Ps. xci. 13, vulg.), and I will show you this power of his in the following examples.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of a woman who died when her hand had been pressed by the devil under the form of a serving man whom she knew.

In Kunincskirgen, as a priest of that town told our fellow monk Lambert, a certain honourable matron was one evening passing alone along the street on her way home in the company of another woman, when the devil, taking the form of a serving man, well known as a cheery fellow, grasped her hand and pressed it closely, but when she ordered him to leave her, at once he disappeared. Then she immediately began to feel ill, and said to her companion: "That serving man pressed my hand, and from that moment a weakness of the heart has come over me." When the other said: "But there has been no one here," the matron answered: "Most certainly there has! and I am not likely to forget the impudent look he gave me." Then she went into her house, lay down on her bed, and was dead within a few days.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of a woman in Altenahr who died within a few days, after being embraced by the devil.

A similar thing happened this year to a woman who lived near Altenahr. She had a drunken husband, and she never dared to go to bed until he had come back from the tavern. One night she had been preparing the dough for making the bread, and being tired out, was sitting outside her house, waiting for the return of her husband, when she saw two men dressed in white coming towards her. One of them ran up to embrace her, and pressed her in his arms, but when she cried out, they both vanished. She rushed into the house, and as soon as she saw the light, went raving mad, and terrified her daughter into loud outcries, and a few days afterwards she died. By what judgment of God such things happen, I cannot tell.

Novice.—These are awful stories.

Monk.—Listen to another, which may well strike terror into us, who call ourselves religious men.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Also of a lay-brother, who, when asleep in the middle of the day, was embraced by a demon under the appearance of a nun, and died within three days.

Once when the lay-brothers of our Order were taking mid-day rest in the dormitory during the summer, the devil, in the shape of a Benedictine nun, went round the beds of all, standing a while by some, and passing in haste by others. When she came to a certain lay-brother she bent over him, and putting her arms round his neck, pressed kisses upon his

mouth. One of the brethren, a truly pious man, saw this, and how the nun then vanished ; and, ſtupefied, both at the appearance of such a person and at such an act in such a place, he got up and went to the bed of the lay-brother, whom he found faſt asleep indeed, but lying in a fashion that was both immodeſt and exposed. When the bell for nones rang and the others rose, this lay-brother found himself too ill to get up, and being taken to the infirmary in the evening, died within three days. I think that it was the maſter of a grange of that monaſtery who told us this ſtory, saying that it had been told to him under seal of confession by the brother who had seen the vision.

Novice.—Since God is exceeding merciful, and a sleeping man differs but little from one who is dead, why should this lay brother be punished thus heavily for so small a fault?

Monk.—He may have been negligent in his care for seemliness. Seemliness or modeſty is the ornament of all virtues, and ought to be observed in behaviour as well as in dress. It often happens that as in the night a man gladly lets his thoughts turn again to those subjects which have occupied his mind during the day, so in his sleep he may make an outward manifeſtation of the thoughts on which he has been dwelling while awake.

Novice.—I underſtand this, because I have known of robbers, who when sleeping at night, have got up, put on their armour, drawn their swords, ſtruck at the walls, and then, when tired out, have put everything back in its place, and gone back to bed ; and in the morning have remembered nothing about it.

Monk.—Possibly this lay-brother had indulged too much in wine, for exposure readily follows drunkenness. If Noah had not been drunken, he would not have been exposed ; and it was because he was exposed that he was mocked by his son. Not holy angels alone, but evil spirits also, are about us at night, and if by negligence or laxity it should happen that we are lying on our beds in unseemly fashion, we put the good to flight, and invite the evil to mock us. How much grace sleepers have thus sometimes loſt, you will hear it in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the seventh book, where

the blessed mother of God visited the sleepers in her own person.

Novice.—Was this lay-brother in a state of grace?

Monk.—I cannot tell any more than I can tell about the aforesaid women, who were slain by the sight of the devil. But that the devil slays some sinners in their sins, the following examples will show.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the knight Thiemon, whose bowels were torn out by the devil, after playing dice with him.

In Soest, which is a town in the diocese of Cologne, there lived a knight called Thiemon, who was so wholly given up to a game of dice, that he could not rest without it night or day. He used always to carry about with him a bag of money, so that he might be ready if by chance he met anyone willing to play. So skilled and fortunate at the game was he, that very few ever played with him without coming away losers. But that posterity might know how contrary to God's will are all such games, in which anger, envy, quarrels and losses are gendered, and words of sin bandied to and fro, the devil was allowed to play with this man who had outplayed many, and to disembowel him who had disembowelled many a purse. One night a demon went into his house, in the form of a man who wished to gamble, carrying under his arm a bag stuffed full with money, sat down at the table, staked his money boldly, threw the dice, and won. When he had gone on winning until the knight had no money left to stake, the latter said angrily: "Surely you must be the devil himself!" and the other replied: "We have had enough now; the dawn is near, and we must go." Then he snatched him up, and dragged him through the roof so roughly, that his bowels were torn out by the broken tiles. What became of his body, or

where it was thrown, is not known to this day, either by his son or by any of his acquaintances. But in the morning the remains of his entrails were found clinging to the tiles, and were buried in the cemetery. The devil allows his servants to prosper well enough in this world, but always betrays them in the end.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of a man who leapt from a tower in Soeſt, truſting in the devil's aid, and was killed.

To this same town, as was told me by Maſter Gozmar, a pious man, and canon of S. Patroclus, came a certain ſtranger, who said that he purposed to leap from the tower of S. Julian, which is very high, if some honour might be gained by it. The citizens, like sensible men, replied: "We shall give you nothing for this, because it simply means that you will kill yourself." Then he said: "I shall do it for the honour of the town." A great number of people collected in the market-place where the tower ſtands, and many others looked on from the windows of the neighbouring houses, while he went up the tower. Then somebody cried out from behind: "Tell me, my good sir, what demon are you employing to help you in this?" and when he had given the name of some demon, the other called: "You may be perfectly certain that he will deceive you, for he is a thorough rascal. If you were to truſt yourself to Oliver, he would not betray you, because he is a responsible demon, and knows how to keep faith." The other answered: "I am quite sure my demon will not deceive me, because I have often had experience of his faithfulness." I think that this Oliver was the same of whom we spoke above in the fourth chapter. To make the ſtory short, the man climbed the tower, leapt from it, came to the ground, and lay ſtill where he fell. The crowd wondered why he did not get

up, for they thought that the ample cloak he was wearing to catch the wind would have saved him from injury ; then some drew near and lifted him up, and found that all his bowels had gushed out. See how the devil rewards his servants, both by killing their bodies and by thrusting down their souls to eternal pains. You will hear enough about their torments in the twelfth book.

Novice.—If we may judge from what is said of this Oliver, it would seem that all demons are not equally malicious.

Monk.—In those, who in heaven cherished the most intense pride and envy against the Creator, there flourishes even now the bitterest eagerness to do harm. It is said that some simply consented to join the others who with Lucifer rebelled against God, and while these fell with the rest, yet they are less evil, and do men less harm, as the following example will make clear.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of a demon who in human form was a faithful servant to a knight.

A demon once took the form of a respectable young man and went to a knight and offered himself as a servant. The latter being much taken both with his appearance and manner of speech, gladly accepted the offer ; and forthwith the demon began his service so diligently and respectfully, so faithfully and willingly, that the knight was pleased beyond all expectation. Never did he mount his horse, nor descend from it, but he found him always ready to hold the stirrup on bended knee ; and always and in all things he showed himself full of discretion, foresight and cheerfulness.

One day they were riding together, and had come to the bank of a great river, when the knight, looking back, saw a number of his mortal enemies in pursuit, and said to his

servant: "We are dead men. See, my enemies are hastening after me, the river bars the way before us, and there is no way of escape. They will either kill me, or take me prisoner." The other answered: "Sir, have no fear; I know well a ford of this river; only follow me, and we shall easily escape." The knight objected that no man had ever forded that river at that point, but nevertheless in the hope of escape he followed his servant, and came safe to the other side. As soon as they were safely across, the enemy reached the bank, and said in wonder: "Who ever heard of a ford on this river? none but the devil could have carried him across;" and they went home in fear. Later it happened that the knight's wife fell sick with a mortal illness; and when all the skill of the physicians proved useless, the demon said to his master: "If my lady would allow herself to be anointed with the milk of a lioness, she would be cured at once." When the knight said: "Where can such milk be got?" he replied: "I will get it." He went away, and came back in an hour, bringing with him a vessel full of milk. The lady was anointed with this, and immediately grew better, and soon recovered all her former strength. Then the knight asked him where he had got the milk so quickly, and he said: "I got it in the mountains of Arabia. When I left you, I went to Arabia, entered a lion's cave, drove away the cubs, milked the lioness, and came back." Stupified by such a reply, the knight said: "Who are you then?" but he answered: "Do not trouble yourself about that; for I am just your serving man." The knight persisted, and at last the servant confessed: "I am a demon, one of those who fell with Lucifer." Then his master, more astounded than ever: "If you are a devil by nature, how do you come to serve a man so faithfully?" The demon answered: "It is my greatest consolation to be with the sons of men." Then said the knight: "But I do not dare to use your service any longer"; and he replied: "Be quite sure of this; that, if you keep me, no harm shall ever come to you through me or because of me." "No, I do not dare," said the other," but anything that you like to ask as a reward, I will gladly give you, even to the half of my property. Never did man serve

man so well and faithfully ; it was by your providing that I escaped death at the river ; and it was through you that my wife recovered her health." Then the demon said : " Since I may no longer be with you, I ask nothing for my service except only five gold pieces." When he had received these, he gave them back to the knight with these words : " I beg that with this money you will buy a bell, and hang it over the roof of that poor forsaken church, that at least by it the faithful may be invited to the divine office each Sunday ; " and he saw him no more.

Novice.—Who could have expected any such conduct from a demon?

Monk.—I will give you another example of devilish kindness, if I may call it so, which will surprise you no less than this.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of a demon who carried the knight Everard to Jerusalem.

In the year in which king Philip rose up against Otto, who was afterwards crowned Emperor, a certain honourable knight, named Everard, a native of the town of Amel, fell grievously sick. As the result of some disease of the brain, he fell into such madness, that his own wife, whom he had dearly loved before his sickness, he now held in the greatest abhorrence, and could not bear to look upon her nor hear the sound of her voice.

One day a demon in the shape of a man appeared to the sick man, and said : " Everard, do you wish to be separated from your wife? " and when he answered that he desired it more than anything, the demon continued : " I will take you to Rome on my horse, and we shall easily obtain a divorce for you from the pope." Put briefly, it seemed to the knight

that he mounted the other's horse as invited, that he went to Rome with him, sitting on the crupper, that he made his petition, and that the pope in the presence of the cardinals, separated him from his wife, and confirmed the divorce with bulls and pontifical letters.

Strange to tell, from the hour that the spirit of the sick man was thus miraculously carried away by the demon, his body lay on the bed, pale and bloodless, but with just enough warmth perceptible in his breast as to cause them to defer his burial.

When the knight seemed to be rejoicing too much over the divorce, the demon asked: "Would you like me now to take you to Jerusalem, where your Lord was crucified and buried, and to the other sacred places, which Christians long to see?" It was from these words chiefly that the knight afterwards guessed that he was a demon. He replied that this was what he desired above all things, and straightway the spirit carried his spirit across the sea, and set him down in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Then he showed him the other holy places, and when the knight had made his due devotions in each, the demon asked: "Would you like now to see your enemy Sephadin and his army?" he answered "Yes," and was carried in a moment to the camp, where the demon pointed out the king and his princes, his knights, engines of war, standards, tents and whole army. After this the demon said: "Would you like now to return home?" and he replied: "Yes, it is full time that I went back." Forthwith the spirit lifted him up, and having transported him to Lombardy, pointed out a wood, and said: "Look there is a man drawing near to that wood, with an ass laden with merchandise that he is bringing to sell here; and there are robbers lying in wait to kill him; he comes from your neighbourhood, would you like to warn him?" "Indeed I would," said he, and ran quickly to the traveller and told him how robbers were waiting for him in the wood. The other joyfully greeted his neighbour, who was well known to him, thanked him, and went round by another way. When they came to Frankfort, the demon said again: "Do you know Waleram, the son of the duke of Limburg?" "I

know him very well," was the reply, " and have often made campaigns with him " ; the demon asked : " Would you like to see him now? " and the knight replied : " But surely he is overseas " ; the other said : " Not at all ; but he is now in such a place, allied with king Philip, and is planning to devastate your country with fire and sword." We saw this fulfilled, when, under that leader, Andernach, Remagen, Bonn and many other towns were plundered and burnt. When the knight had received this heavy news with pain, and had been shown the king and the princes and Waleram, his spirit was brought back uninjured to his body, which was still lying upon the bed.

His normal life was soon restored, and he quickly grew strong and vigorous, and his wife, whom he had hated before he was carried away, he now loved again with all the old affection ; and all men wondered when he told the tales of what he had seen and heard. For he retained a vivid recollection of all that he had seen in Rome and at Jerusalem, in Lombardy and Germany, both places and persons ; he remembered them all as clearly as he had seen them, indeed more clearly than if he had looked upon them only with the eyes of the body. The structure of the city of Rome, the statue of the lord pope Innocent, the appearance of the cardinals, and of the churches ; and in the Holy Land, the person of Sephadin, and his army ; and so too the mountains, rivers and castles, and the general view of all the countries over which he had passed ; all these he described so accurately in their appearance and by their names, that those who had seen any of them with the bodily eye could find nothing to contradict. Meanwhile his fellow countryman had returned from Lombardy with the profits of his merchandise, and testified in the presence of many, how he had seen him there, and how his warning had saved him from the peril of robbers.

Novice.—I have heard that some demons are of such a nature that they even turn towards good those who are possessed by them, and will not suffer them to sin.

Monk.—I remember to have heard an example that gives a proof of this.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of a demon who would not allow a man possessed by him to taſte of a theft in the fifth generation.

A certain rich man made a banquet for the poor as an act of almsgiving. Among the guests there was one who was possessed ; and while the reſt were eating flesh, this man raised indeed the meat to his lips, but could not eat it. Some of those present spoke then to the demon : " Why, villain, do you not suffer the man to eat? " To whom he replied : " I do not want him to sin by eating what comes from robbery." When they cried out : " You lie, because the giver of this feaſt is a man of integrity," he replied : " I do not lie ; that veal which is now being divided among the poor is derived in the fifth generation from a cow that was ſtolen ; " and all marvelled at these words.

Novice.—If demons look upon a theft as ſtill a theft after five generations, I think they will punish a direct theft with very bitter pains.

Monk.—That is undoubted. Remember that heifer, by whom and on whom the knight Elias was punished, as was told in the seventh chapter of the second book. This heifer calls to my memory what was said by the obsessed woman in Brisach, of whom I made mention above in the twenty-sixth chapter. One day she saw John, the burgrave of Rheineck, and, as I was told by one who was present, cried out againſt him in the public ſtreet : " That calf that you took from such a widow, we shall diſtil in the flames of hell, and put it into your eyes drop by drop, and we shall pour all its fat over your body. And the wine which is sold in this town under your sign, we shall pour boiling into your mouth." The knight was terrified by these words, gave up his shop, and reſtored her calf to the widow.

Novice.—It is clear enough to me now that there are demons, that they are many, and that they are malicious. May I hear some examples that show they are hoſtile to us?

Monk.—They are so hoſtile to man, that they sow discord

between friends, and do not allow enemies to be reconciled. They keep back those who wish to go on pilgrimage for Christ's sake and for their sins. They turn aside those who desire to be converted, and trouble and hinder in many ways those who are converted.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Of a demon who tried to sow discord between two friends who were on pilgrimage together.

Two rich and honourable citizens of Cologne, very close friends, set out together on a pilgrimage to S. James of Compostella; their names were Sistappus and Godfrey. One day when they were riding together behind all the others, a demon, envying their friendship and affection, waited for them at the entrance of a wood, and broke in half a heavy stick which Godfrey was carrying slung over his back. He looked round, and seeing that they were alone, turned to his companion, much disturbed: "Eh? brother, why have you broken my stick?" The other denied with an oath that he had done any such thing; and Godfrey, as he told me himself, was so angry that he could scarcely restrain his hands from assaulting him. At length he was restored to his good sense by the grace of God, and the merits of the blessed apostle; and confessed his regret to his beloved friend, and the demon, the source of all the trouble, fled away in confusion.

CHAPTER XL.

Also of a demon who in the guise of a priest conducted a knight through a place full of thorns and so made the two into enemies.

An honourable priest, now a monk in our Order, told me how a vicar of a small town, wishing to make himself popular with his parishioners, used to play games with them, frequent taverns, and conform to their habits in every possible way. Now there was in the same town a knight, a fellow countryman, who was his companion in all his follies, and they were *of one heart and one mind,* not in Christ, but in the world. They often invited each other to games and to feasts, and often dragged each other to the taverns.

When the devil, the contriver of all misunderstanding, saw this, he resolved to change their worldly friendship into more perilous enmity ; and one night when the soldier had gone to bed, he came to him in the guise of the priest, and urged him eagerly both by words and signs to go with him. The knight, in great excitement, got up, and with bare feet and very little clothing went after the seeming priest, and was taken over a field full of thorns and brambles. His feet were soon torn and bleeding, and he cried out angrily after the demon : " Rogue of a priest, to your own hurt you have brought me here." Meanwhile the demon kept calling to him, " Come on, come on," and the angry knight, picking up a hoe, which by accident lay in his path, clove the skull, as he thought, of the priest, and left him lying there, with his face covered with blood. Then with great toil and pain, the knight got back to his house, and grumbled to his wife, household and friends of the way in which the priest had mocked him ; and when they refused to believe, he added : " Well, I gave him a bad wound on his tonsured skull."

That same night the priest, knowing nothing of all this, on his way to his bedroom, struck his head against the lintel of a door, and cut his crown so badly that his face was covered with blood. He went to bed ; and in the morning, when

the bell rang for mass, the people waited in vain in the church for the priest, who could not come owing to the pain of his wound. When the knight was told of this, he understood the cause at once, and said: "That is just what I told you." Why say more? The priest continued to deny the story emphatically, and his friends and relations only grew the more angry and would not believe him, and for two years he was driven out of his church, and only with great difficulty was he reconciled to them again at last. From these two examples you may see how demons sow discord between friends, whether the bond between them be spiritual or worldly; and it is just as certain that they have great power in preventing enemies from becoming friends.

CHAPTER XLI.

Of a demon who said that he had sowed discord between a knight and a monastery.

Not long ago a certain knight was harassing most unjustly a house of our Order. When a demon was chattering through the mouth of a certain obsessed woman, one of the bystanders said to him: "Tell me, O full of all iniquity, why you do not persuade that knight to leave the servants of God in peace?" To whom the devil replied with a grin: "What are you saying, O full of all foolishness? The whole trouble has been set on foot by my plans, and are you advising me to persuade them to peace?" Moreover, that they discourage and prevent those who wish to go on pilgrimage for the sake of Christ, here is an example.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of the knight Mengoz, who was dragged along the pavement by a demon.

A knight named Mengoz went to France as a young man to learn the language, and there fell grievously sick; and in hope of recovery, he made a vow of pilgrimage to S. Remigius at Rheims, but when he got better, he returned to his own country without carrying it out. After some time, another noble knight named Guldolph, of the town of Sevelen, proposed to take ship and go to Citeaux at the time of the general Chapter, and Mengoz, hearing of this, asked to be allowed to go with him as a fellow-pilgrim. He accepted with pleasure, and they came to a town called Tricaster, near Dijon, and had sat down on the ground for their meal, after the manner of penitents, when there appeared S. Remigius, bishop of Rheims, robed in pontificals, who said: "Mengoz, why have you not performed your vow?" At this the knight was greatly troubled, both by the vision and by the remembrance of his unfulfilled vow, when a demon flew up to him, and added to the warning of the saint such words of dissuasion as these: "There is no hurry, you will of course pay your vow when you can." Then without further words, the demon seized the man by the foot, and dragged him face downwards along the pavement so mercilessly, that his face was cut in four places, and the ground bespattered with his blood. Now when Guldolph saw his friend dragged along in this fashion, and could see no cause nor any that dragged, he got up from his place in much anxiety to go to his help, and, as he told me himself, though he seized the other with both arms, he could not hold him only with greatest difficulty, strong as he was, and still is. When Mengoz told him both of his fault and its punishment, he said: "I advise you to fulfil your vow"; and when his friend went on to say that he had not money enough for the expenses, he handed over to him what was necessary, and the neglected vow was fulfilled.

Novice.—As I see it, there are demons not far from us, and always ready to punish us.

Monk.—That they are always near us and about us you shall learn from the following story.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Of a demon who guarded a vineyard for a reward.

Last year, at the time of the vintage, the cellarer of Laach entrusted to two serving men the care of the vineyard of one of the monastery farms. One night, one of them, wishing to ease himself of his nightly watch, called upon the devil in a jesting sort of way, saying: "Come, devil, if you will watch over this vineyard for me, I will give you a reward." Scarcely had he uttered the words, when a demon appeared and said: "Here I am, what will you give me to look after it?" He replied: "A box full of grapes, but on this condition, that if anyone comes in between nightfall and dawn, you will break his neck, not excepting anyone, either myself or anybody else." The devil made the promise, and the servant, as if free of the vineyard, went back to the house, late in the evening; but the cellarer saw him and asked: "Why are you not in the vineyard?" and when he answered: "I have left my companion there," alluding to the demon, the cellarer, thinking that he meant his fellow servant, retorted angrily: "Go back this minute, one is not enough." The man returned, and climbed up with his companion into the watch tower, which was outside the vineyard. About midnight they heard a movement as of a man walking between the vines, and he, who knew nothing of the aforesaid compact, said: "There is somebody in the vineyard," and the other replied: "Stay where you are; I will go down and see." He went down and walked round the vineyard on the outside, and when he could find no traces of anyone within

the hedge, he understood that it was his caretaker that was there. In the morning he told the whole story to his comrade, and wishing to give the demon his reward, he filled a box with grapes, and put it down beside a vine ; then he went away, and came back in a little while with his comrade, and found not a grape stone left.

Novice.—These things are wonderful enough, but I beg you to show me how they obstruct those who are desirous of being converted.

Monk.—I will tell you what was told me by a nun, under compulsion from her abbess.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Of the nun Euphemia, who was greatly persecuted by a demon.

When this nun was a little girl in her father's house, a demon used often to appear to her under different forms and terrified and saddened her childhood in many ways, to such an extent, that she feared to be driven mad, and openly expressed her wish to be received as a novice in our Order. One night he appeared to her in human form, and tried to dissuade her from taking the vows, saying: " Euphemia, do not be converted, but take instead a young and comely husband, so that with him you may enjoy the pleasures of the world, for you shall have abundance of costly clothes and delicate food. But if you enter the Order, you will always be ragged and wretched, you will be a prey to hunger and thirst and cold, and you will never have any happiness in this life." To this she replied: " What will become of me at the end, if I die in the midst of those pleasures that you promise me? " To this the devil made no reply, but seized the girl, and dragging her to the window of the upper room where she slept, tried to throw her down ; but when

she repeated the angelic salutation, the enemy let her go, and said: "If you go to the convent, I will never cease from persecuting you;" and when he had said this, he pinched the maiden roughly, changed himself into the shape of an enormous dog, leapt out of the window and disappeared; and thus by the invocation of the Virgin Mother of God, the virgin was set free. How hostile the devil is to the converted, and in how many ways he harasses and impedes them will be shown by what follows. When this girl had become a nun, and was one night lying awake in her bed, she saw around her several demons in human shape. One of them, of hideous aspect, stood at her head, and two at her feet, and a fourth at her side; and this last cried in a loud voice to the others: "Why are you hesitating? Take her up just as she lies, and come." They replied: "We cannot do it; for she has invoked that woman."

Novice.—How is it that demons can presume to speak of the Mother of their Creator by a name expressive only of condition and not of honour? "Woman" is a name of natural corruption only; "Virgin" or "Mary" or "Mother of God," these are names of glory.

Monk.—Because of their unworthiness they do not dare to utter with polluted mouth a name of honour or glory. And yet, even after the utterance of the angelic salutation, this same demon still dragged at the girl's right arm, and in dragging pinched her so much that her arm was swollen and bruised. Her left arm was free, but in her simplicity, she did not dare to cross herself with it, thinking that to make the holy sign with the left hand would be of no avail; nevertheless, driven by necessity, she did at last cross herself with that hand, and so put the demons to flight. As soon as she was delivered from them, she ran half fainting to the bed of another sister, and breaking the rule of silence, told her all that she had seen and suffered. Then the sisters, as was told me by the lady Elizabeth of blessed memory, who was the abbess of that convent, put her back to bed, and read over her the opening of S. John's gospel, and in the morning found her completely recovered. One stormy night in the following year, when this nun was lying awake in her bed,

she saw at some distance two demons in the form of the two sisters she loved best, and they said to her, "Sister Euphemia, get up and come with us into the cellar that we may draw the convent beer. She had felt suspicious of them, both because of the unusual hour, and because they had broken the rule of silence; and now terror overcame her, and she covered her head with the bed clothes and made no answer. Forthwith one of the evil spirits came near, and laid his hand upon her breast, pressing it with so much violence, that blood was driven out in great quantities through her mouth and nose; both demons then took the form of dogs and leapt out of the window. When the sisters got up for matins, and saw her weak and ill, pale and bloodless, they enquired of her by signs the reason of it; and when she had told them all the story, they were as much troubled by the cruelty of the demons as by the suffering of the maiden. Two years before this, when a new dormitory had been built at the convent, and beds placed in it, the same nun saw a demon, in the shape of an old and very much deformed dwarf, go round all the dormitory, and touch each bed, as if to say: "I will mark diligently the place of each, for they shall not be left unvisited."

Novice.—Can you tell me why the merciful Lord allows maidens so gentle and pure to be thus cruelly persecuted by foul and merciless spirits?

Monk.—After tasting a bitter cup, the sweet, as you yourself know, is still more sweet, and when a black colour is removed, the white shines more brightly. Read the visions of Witin, Gotteschalk and others, who have been allowed to see the pains of the wicked, and the glory of the elect, and you will see that, almost in every case, the vision of hell comes first. The Lord, wishing to show to His spouse the hidden glories of His happiness, suffers her first to be tempted with dreadful visions, that afterwards she may be the more able to rejoice, and to know the gulf that lies between sweet and bitter, between light and darkness.

CHAPTER XLV.

How the nun Elisabeth was persecuted by a demon.

In the same convent, which is called Hoven, there is a nun named Elisabeth, who is often persecuted by a demon. One day seeing him in the dormitory, she gave him a box on the ear being well aware that it was he. When he asked her why she struck him so cruelly, she replied: "Because you often trouble me." Then he said: "Yesterday I troubled your sister, the singer, a great deal more, but she did not strike me; and indeed this sister had been greatly harassed on that day. From this we may gather that anger, rancour, impatience and other similar faults, are put into the heart by the devil. Another time matins were very late, owing to the devil's action, as was afterwards clear, and Elisabeth, with a lighted candle in her hand, was hastening to ring the bell, and as she was about to enter the oratory, she saw a demon, in the guise of a man wearing a slashed doublet, standing in front of her. Thinking that some man must have got in, she fell back in terror down the dormitory steps, so that she was ill for some days afterwards, from the sudden shock as well as from the fall; and the abbess herself was so much distressed by this mishap, that she too fell sick. When they asked Elisabeth the reason of her fall and outcry, she told them of the vision, and added: "If I had known it was a demon and not a man, I would have given him a good box on the ear!" so had she *girded her loins with strength, and strengthened her arms* (Prov. xxxi. 17.) against the devil.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Of a recluse, who was delivered from a demon by the Benedicite.

A woman, who had become a recluse for Christ's sake, was so relentlessly attacked by a demon, that she could not

be safe from him even in bed. When she found that she could not free herself from this importunity by any spiritual means, neither by prayer, nor confession, nor the sign of the cross, she told her trouble to a certain pious man, who gave her the following advice: "When the demon comes to you," he said, "simply say to him Benedicite." The next time he came, she did this; and the evil spirit, as if driven by a whirlwind, sprang away from her at once, nor ever again dared to approach her.

Novice.—I rejoice to hear that there is so great power in our customary greeting.

Monk.—So great is the malice of demons, that they will seduce with fantastic visions those whom they cannot lead astray or break with their terrors. For example:

CHAPTER XLVII.

Of the recluse Bertradis.

Near the castle of Volmarstein, in Westphalia, lived a recluse, named Bertradis, a pious and saintly woman, and of great repute, owing to the revelations with which God had enlightened her. For a long time, as a result, I was told, of a lack of discretion, she had received an angel of darkness thinking him to be an angel of light. Now the demon, surrounded with a fantastic splendour, was wont to come to her through a window of her cell, and give her information about future events, and answer her questions. And if any came to her, desiring to know the condition of a dead friend, or to be assured about some incertitude, she asked them to wait till next morning, and consulted her angel; she was often deceived by him, and gave false answers, thinking them true. Now when this came to the knowledge of brother Herman, the recluse of Arnsberg, of whom I made mention in the 87th chapter of the last book, since he was not ignorant

of the wickedness of demons, he gave this advice to Bertradis: "Be careful, my sister, because the messenger of Satan often transforms himself into an angel of light, seduces many and sometimes mocks even the holiest of men. Do then as I tell you: make a cross of wax that has been blessed, and fix it upon the ledge of the window by which he enters; if on his entrance he does not avoid it, he is an angel of the Lord; but if otherwise, he is a messenger of the devil." Accordingly she did this, and in the night the demon came to the window with his usual glitter, and when he looked in but would not enter and the woman asked him why he did not come in, he replied: "I cannot come in, unless you throw away this wax from the window"; then she understood how she had been deceived for a long time, spat at him, and broke out into abuse, and adjured him by the Holy Trinity that he should never presume to come again. Do you see now how Almighty God has devised different medicines against the different attacks of demons? He keeps some from us by the antidote of confession, others by the words of the Lord's annunciation, to wit, the Ave Maria, some by the word Benedicite and many by the sign of the Cross; and of all these you have had illustrations above.

Novice.—Did this recluse sin, in taking the angel of darkness for the angel of light?

Monk.—I have read in the writings of our fathers, that a man so deceived by the devil is deserving of reward for believing him so long as he persuades him to what is good; for the discerning of spirits is not given to all. Wherefore the Apostle says: *Prove the spirits whether they be of God* (1 John iv. 1). I ought also to add that the messenger of Satan does not only transform himself into an angel of light by assuming such splendours, but also often appears to some under vile forms, for he is accustomed to show himself to men for their deception, sometimes in the form of a dog or a pig, or again in the form of a bear or a cat or any other animal.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Of a lay-brother who saw a demon bring phantasms into the choir.

Once in Hemmenrode a devil was seen to bring a herd of swine into the church, and afterwards to take them out again in the same way in which he brought them in. At another time a certain lay-brother, who does not wish his name to be mentioned, saw a demon take the form of the prior and he was wearing on his neck a sort of collar made out of a bean stalk. One of his fellows went before him leading him by the collar as if he were a dog; and while they passed along the choir in this strange procession, it happened that the prior himself came into the church in order to arouse the lay-brothers if he should find any sleeping; and as soon as he entered that fantastic vision vanished from the eyes of the lay-brother.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Of the visions of the precentor Herman.

Once when Herman our precentor, of blessed memory, was standing in the choir when lauds were being sung one bright day in summer he had closed his eyes for a moment from weariness, and when he opened them again he saw what seemed to him the hindquarters of a bear going out from the choir. And while he was wondering greatly at this vision, he saw the same bear return and stop before the presbytery, in the place where the monks are wont to prostrate themselves on their way in and out of church. The animal turned his head round and looked this way and that and then spoke in a human voice: "No matter. It happens that they are devout for the moment, so I will go away and come back

presently." And as he watched, the creature went out. Brother Richard is a witness of this vision for he told it him at once. This is that same Herman who saw the jars of wine before Henry Fikere and the bear, as was told in chapter ninety-one of the fourth book.

Novice.—If the devil assumes animal forms of this kind for our hurt, I imagine that he must mock very grossly those who give way to his suggestions.

Monk.—That is most certain.

CHAPTER L.

Of a recluse who saw demons upon the shoulders of the monks of Burscheid.

A certain recluse is still living at Aix ; she is well known to me, but I will not mention her name, because if I did she might suffer for it. Before her seclusion while she was still a girl, and was still wearing secular dress although a Religious, she used to see demons under the forms of apes and cats, sitting upon the shoulders of monks of Burscheid, as they walked to and fro from their church. And because some of them were held captive by consent of their vices, in whatever direction and at whatever person these phantoms looked, the eyes of the monks followed them, and their gestures imitated the frivolities of the demons. She saw something too, still more horrible : there were some before whom great and hideous dogs went in such a way, that the chains which could be seen round their necks passed also round the necks of the monks, and by them they were dragged to share in the gambols of the demons.

Novice.—Alas ! that men created in the image and likeness of God, and even raised above ordinary men by the dignity of the Order, so that they ought to have dominion

over unclean spirits, should, owing to their evil life, be thus vilely mocked by them.

Monk.—This is what the Psalmist sadly says: *Man will not abide in honour, seeing he may be compared to the beasts that perish; this is the way of them.*

Novice.—From what you have said above it seems to me that man often gives the devil opportunity for tempting him.

Monk.—This is indeed true. I will show you an example.

CHAPTER LI.

Of a monk who shirked the labour of planting cabbages and was immediately tempted by the devil under the form of a woman.

Once the whole community of Hemmenrode was collected in the garden planting cabbages. Among them there was a certain monk named Thomas, in whose heart thoughts like these began to rise: "If you were only in your father's house your very maid-servant would not condescend to such work as this." And thereupon in anger he left his brethren, and the spirit of pride led him to a place where he might attack him the more fiercely. When he found himself alone in the wood, the tempter appeared, and him whom he had attacked before only in thought now he assaulted with undisguised and visible onslaught. For he appeared to him under the form of a woman and began to speak to him. But he, laying his finger upon his lips signed to her that it was not permitted to him to speak. Then the head and father of all lies replied through that phantasmal woman, whom he had fashioned to deceive him: "I do not know how that may be," she said, "but I have just come from the convent and the prior gave me leave to speak with you." He believed her, and broke his rule of silence. Then she told him that his parents had sent

for him and that he was to go with her to Trèves to buy a horse, and so make the journey to his own home. Thereupon the miserable creature going before him drew after her the miserable man ; she indeed passing through all the close thickets of undergrowth quite easily, while he followed with very great difficulty. At length disturbed by the roughness of the way and the severity of the toil, he said : " In the name of the Father why are we journeying thus? " No sooner had he said this than that evil spirit vanished ; and although the weather had been calm and pleasant till then, there suddenly arose at that moment a great wind and storm of rain, and he returned to the convent outwardly wet through, and inwardly filled with confusion. He confessed afterwards that so long as that woman was walking before him he had felt great temptations of the flesh.

Novice.—I think that it must have been an unclean spirit.

Monk.—You are right. For sin is often punished by more sin, and in many mental pride is humbled by some lapse in the flesh. You have many examples of this in Vitaspatrum.

Novice.—Can the devil harm a man just as he wills?

Monk.—Certainly not ; never at all without God's permission, and then only in the body as in the case of Job. Never can he injure a man in the soul, i.e. never can he induce him to sin unless the man consents in his heart.

CHAPTER LII.

How the devil is like a lion bound to a stake.

The devil is like a lion or a bear fastened to a stake, which can growl around within the range of his chain, but cannot injure anyone unless he catch that person within the circle. The power of the devil is so limited by the chain of Divine constraint, that he cannot compel anyone to sin, unless a man

comes to him, moved to the sin by his own consent. According to the Apostle Peter, *He goes about like a roaring lion* within the range of his chain, *seeking whom he may devour* (1 Pet. v. 8). Often enough he terrifies and troubles even holy men, but he cannot do them harm.

CHAPTER LIII.

Of a canon of Bonn who was tempted by him.

In the cathedral of Bonn, as I heard from his fellow canons there was a certain canon, of a pure and deeply religious life, to whom the devil was so hostile that often at night, when he was about to read the lesson at matins, he would cover over the letters or turn the page or sometimes would blow out the light. He did this to bring confusion on the holy man in the presence of his brethren, and by this confusion to provoke him to impatience ; and his malice is so great, that when he finds he cannot irritate or disturb the Religious, he at least mocks and provokes them.

CHAPTER LIV.

How he mocked the convent of Mt. St. Walburgis.

A certain nun of our Order named Petrissa told me that one day at matins, on a certain festival, she was standing a little removed from the other sisters while they were singing the Psalms with great heartiness, and she broke out herself into an act of thanksgiving, saying: " Blessed be Thou O Lord for that Thou rewardest this beloved convent which is praising Thee so devotedly " ; and immediately she heard a hateful noise as of one hastening from behind her to the convent, and saying with a loud voice : " This shall be done for God,"

making a mock of her thanksgiving. And forthwith all the hairs of her head ſtood on end.

Novice.—Often has sudden horror come upon me both in the choir and in other places. What do you think is the meaning of such terrors?

Monk.—They come from the presence of demons. There is a dog which is called a wolf-dog and his nature is of such a kind, that he can tell when a wolf is near without seeing him with his eyes ; and because there is a natural antipathy between the animals, he immediately grows wild and breaks out into barking. So it is with man and the devil. The Lord has placed enmity between them ; and woe unto the man who makes peace with the demon, for always *it ſhall bruiſe thy head and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel* (Gen. iii. 15). And though the outer man may not see him, yet the inner man, i.e. the spirit perceives plainly enough the presence of that evil spirit. Why then should there be any wonder if at such a time the man is troubled and feels horror? How true this is I will show you by an example.

CHAPTER LV.

Of a prieſt whom the devil terrified as he went to church carrying a ſword.

Near Cologne there was a certain prieſt named Michael, a very religious man for his class. He was the rector of the churches of two small towns, one of which was named Burge, and the other Rode. Once at Eaſter after he had said matins rather late in one of the churches, and was haſtening alone, as he had no servant, before daylight to the other, he carried with him a sword in fear of the dangers of the road. And when he came to a certain wood, so great fear and horror seized upon him that all his hair ſtood on end, as men say, and a cold sweat broke out on every limb. The cause of this horror did not

long lie hid, because as soon as he turned his eyes to the wood he saw a man of hideous aspect standing near a tall tree. And as he looked, this man grew suddenly so vast in size that his height was equal to that of the tree, and round him all the trees were crashing and there were fearful blasts of wind. Terrified beyond measure, the priest fled and was pursued by the devil with a whirlwind, even until he came to the town of Rode. Afterwards when this priest was telling the story of his vision and his terror to the lay-brother of the monastery of Altberg, Richard by name, he, as a truly pious man, gave him a truly pious answer: "Sir," he said, "the Church would tell you, that if in going to the Divine Office you had taken a psalm into your mouth instead of a sword into your hand, these things would not have happened on the road. That terror of yours was the penalty of sin; for in truth the devil fears a psalm, not a sword (Job xli. 22, 24, 27, 33).

Novice.—I gather from these words of holy Job, that if the strength of the devil were not bound and limited, no man would be able to stand before him.

Monk.—That, however, he cannot injure a man, except so far as God permits him, I shall show you by a very clear example in the last chapter of this book.

CHAPTER LVI.

Of a bell-ringer whom the devil carried to the pinnacle of the Castle of Ysenberg.

In a town called Amel, in the diocese of Cologne, it happened a few years ago that there was a bell-ringer living under the vow of a certain pilgrimage and he had agreed one day with a woman of the same town that they should make a start together the next morning; and she asked him to ring for matins a little earlier than usual that they might set out before the sun grew too hot, and he promised to do this. That

night the devil came to his bedside, shook him and said: "Ring for matins," and so went away. He immediately got up and saw a light burning in the church, but when he learnt that it was not yet cock-crow he thought that he had been aroused by the aforesaid woman and left the church meaning to tell her to go back to bed, because it was too early yet. He looked for her everywhere but could not find her, but noticed a black ox standing opposite him. This animal put out its tongue and with it took hold of the man and mounted him upon his back, flew through the air with him and set him down on a pinnacle of the tower of the castle of Ysenberg. Then he said to the man: "Are you afraid at all?" and the other replied: "It is by God's permission that you have been able to bring me here, and there is nothing that you can do against me except what He permits." The devil said: "Do me homage and I will set you down safely and also give you great riches; but if you refuse you shall either die here by hunger or else be dashed to pieces by falling headlong." To whom the bell-ringer, putting his trust in Christ, replied: "I adjure you in the name of Jesus Christ to do me no injury, but to put me down without any harm to my body." Immediately the devil took him and set him down very roughly in a field near the town of Gerresheim before the dawn of day, which day happened to be the anniversary of the dedication of the church of that town. At dawn, men hastening with torches to the service of matins found this bell-ringer in a field in a fainting condition; and when they had revived him and had heard his story they were greatly astonished. On the fourth day indeed he returned to his house and related to all so fully the position both of the towns and buildings, which he had never seen before, that they could not doubt that he had been really carried away.

Novice.—I now admit that it has been clearly proved to me both by teaching and examples that there are demons, that they are many in number, and malicious and hostile to men.

Monk.—My chief advice is that now that we know of them, we give no sort of consent to them (Matt. xxv. 41), but rather by resisting them and all the vices they urge upon us, we may be blessed enough to hear with the elect (Matt. xxv. 34).

BOOK VI

OF SINGLENESS OF HEART

CHAPTER I.

Of the virtue of simplicity.

Among all the antidotes which the virtues offer against the stresses of temptation and against the demons who tempt, the practice of simplicity seems to be the most efficacious. This virtue is free from all gall of bitterness, from anger, envy and rancour ; it is also free from the poisoned eye of suspicion and from the dog-like tooth of detraction. Especially to the newly converted is simplicity necessary, because if a novice wish to find fault with the simplicity of the Order and to pass judgment upon the acts of his seniors and the regulations of our predecessors, and to be always disputing with his master as to the why and wherefore of everything, never will he have any peace. Wherefore the abbot Charles, when I was a novice, used often to say to me : " Brother, if you wish to find peace in the Order, let the simplicity of the Order be enough for you." Isaiah, admiring the virtue in the elect says *Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows* (Isaiah lx. 8). The windows of the doves are the eyes of simple-minded monks ; their flight is the uplifting of contemplation ; their dove-like appearance is the simplicity of their intention. Both eyes of the religious ought to be simple, both the outward and the inward ; the eye of the body, so that suspicion may be far from it ; the eye of the heart, so that its intention may be pure. This of itself turns an evil work into a good one, and conversely as I shall show you by a very clear example in the next chapter.

Novice.—Readily do I agree with that, because I remember that the Saviour said: *if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light* (Matt. vi. 22).

Monk.—In truth when the intention is single, it is necessary that clear action should follow; and so, on the contrary, an evil eye, i.e. an evil and perverse intention makes the whole body, i.e. the work full of darkness. Wherefore it seems well to treat of simplicity in the sixth book, because as six is by nature the perfect number, so this virtue, according to the Saviour's words already quoted, makes the whole man full of light and perfect. We see the single-minded Jacob blessed by his father; and his son the single-minded Joseph set over all Egypt by Pharaoh; and the single-minded Job blessed by the Lord. Christ preaches the virtue of simplicity to His disciples (Matt. x. 16; and Matt. xviii. 3). Simplicity is the road to God, pleasing to angels, and delightful to man. Wherefore, leaving for the moment all other virtues, I will show you by a few examples the marvellous efficacy of holy simplicity.

CHAPTER II.

Of a simple monk, who, by eating flesh in a castle restored to his monastery its cattle.

Dom Wido, a Cistercian abbot and afterwards a cardinal, was once sent to Cologne to confirm an election which had been made on behalf of Otto against Philip, and brought back from thence a story of holy simplicity both amusing and amazing. He said that a house of our Order was situated on the estates of a certain powerful noble, and this tyrant, who feared not God, neither regarded man, often vexed the monastery in various ways. He took of its corn, wine and cattle as much and as often as he pleased, and he left to the brethren just as much as he chose. He acted in this way for so long

that from habit his conduct became a sort of law, and the convent, after making many complaints to no purpose, gave up in despair and submitted ; but one day he carried off the greater part of their cattle and ordered them to be taken to his castle.

When this became known, the abbot and brethren were very much troubled and debated long what they ought to do. Finally they determined that someone should go to the castle, at least to let the noble know what sort of a reward he was heaping up for himself, and if possible it should be the abbot. But he replied : " I will not go, because we shall get no advantage from warning him, but shall only be beating the air." When the prior and the cellarer had excused themselves in similar fashion, the abbot said : " Is there anyone here who is willing to make this journey?" All were silent except one who was inspired from on high and promptly answered : " Let that monk go," mentioning by name an old brother of extremely simple character. The monk was summoned ; was asked if he would go to the castle on this errand ; he agreed and was despatched.

As he went out of the room he said to the abbot in the great simplicity of his heart : " Father, if he should offer to restore me any portion of the herd, shall I accept or not?" The abbot replied : " If you can get anything back take it in the name of the Lord ; half a loaf is better than no bread."

He departed and came to the castle, bringing to the tyrant the message of the abbot and brethren, together with their petition. The tyrant made a mock of his discourse and said scoffingly : " Sir, wait a little until you have dined and then I will give you your answer." At the dinner hour he was given a place at the common table and the ordinary food, to wit, flesh in abundance was set before him, as before the rest. The holy man, remembering the words of his abbot and not doubting that the flesh so lavishly placed before him was a part of the monastery cattle, ate as much of the flesh as he could, that he might not break the law of obedience.

The lord of the castle, who was sitting opposite with his wife, was much impressed that the monk should be eating flesh so heartily, and when dinner was over he called him

aside and said: "Tell me, good sir, is your convent accustomed to eat flesh?" When the other replied: "Certainly not"; the lord added: "What do they do when they go outside?" "Neither inside the convent," said he, "nor outside do they eat flesh." Then the tyrant asked: "Why then did you eat all this flesh to-day?" The monk answered: "When my abbot sent me here he ordered me to get back as much of our cattle as I could; therefore I could not refuse. And because I felt sure that the meat set before me belonged to my monastery, and also because I feared that that would be all I could recover, viz, as much as I could take away through my teeth, I ate for the sake of obedience that I might not return wholly empty."

And because God does not reject the simple, *neither will He help the evil doers* (Job viii. 20), this noble, when he heard what the monk said, was moved by his simplicity, or rather by the Holy Spirit who spoke by the mouth of the old man, and recognised the warning and replied: "Wait for me here; I will go and take counsel with my wife as to what I shall do for you." And when he came to her and told her in order the words of the old monk, he added: "I fear the swift vengeance of God upon me, if I should now repel this man so simple and so upright." She replied in similar fashion that she was also troubled by the same thought.

Then he went back to the old man and said: "Good father, for the sake of your holy simplicity which has moved me to pity, I will restore to your monastery all that is still left of your cattle, and so far as I can, I will give you satisfaction for all the injuries I have done you, and from this day I will never trouble you again.

At these words the old man thanked him and returned joyfully to the monastery with the cattle, and to the great astonishment of the abbot and the brethren repeated the words of the noble. From the peace that they enjoyed thenceforward they learnt by experience how great is the virtue of simplicity. See what an example you have of how an act, which is sometimes wrong in itself, may became good and full of light by reason of a single eye, i.e. a good intention. In truth this monk by eating flesh in the castle would have sinned if

he had not been justified by simplicity. And the result showed not only that there was no sin in his act, but even that it was meritorious.

Novice.—Do they sin who, when monks are away from their convents, set before them meat or fat, or meat soup, and deceive them into eating by an artifice?

Monk.—I do not think they sin if they are impelled by the necessity of hospitality, or by the fervour of charity which is still more worthy. The monk who eats is excused from sin by his ignorance or simplicity; the host, as I said, by his charity. Here is an example.

CHAPTER III.

Of Christian, the dean of Bonn, who in simplicity set before an abbot pulse cooked in lard.

Christian, the dean of Bonn, of blessed memory, a man of upright life and great learning, died among us as a novice. He was a man most fervent in hospitality, and once invited Herman, the abbot of Hemmenrode, who had formerly been dean of the Holy Apostles in Cologne, a man both learned and discreet, to dine with him. And since there was no food in his house that did not contain meat, he secretly ordered his servant to take out the pieces of bacon and to place the pulse thus treated before the abbot. While he was eating in all simplicity of the dish placed before him, a monk of his, who was not so simple-minded, found a small piece of bacon in his dish and showed it to the abbot. As soon as he saw it, the abbot pushed away his plate for conscience sake. When they were on their way home the abbot blamed the monk for his inquisitiveness, saying: "Ill may you fare, for to-day you have robbed me of my food. If you had held your tongue, I, by eating in ignorance, should not have sinned in my dinner." But I remember that Daniel, the abbot of Schönau, acted in a way exactly contrary to this.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the monk Gotteschalk, who in the simplicity of his heart ate a pie cooked with lard in Siegburg.

Once when this Daniel, who was then our prior, was dining in Siegburg and with him there were Brother Gotteschalk of Volmarstein, a monk simple and upright, there were set before them by the brothers of the same monastery a pie which had been cooked in lard. Now the prior recognised this at once by the smell and would not eat himself, but he did not prevent the monk from eating. When the dinner was over and they were talking together, Gotteschalk said to the prior: "Lord prior, why did you not eat of the pie, for it was very good?" The prior replied: "I am not surprised to hear that it was very good, for it was very well steeped in lard." "And why," said the other, "did you not tell me this?" The prior answered: "I did not wish to spoil your meal; you need not be unhappy about it, because your ignorance is a full excuse." For this Daniel was a learned man and before his conversion a scholasticus.

Novice.—I am not surprised that monks should sometimes be deceived in lard and in the fat of meat; but I do wonder that some should be so simple as to be deceived in the gross substance, i.e. in the meat itself.

Monk.—I think that this sometimes may happen through the affection of those who serve them. When the holy Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, had one day invited some of the holy brethren to dinner and had put before them flesh of birds, they all thought that they were eating vegetables, until he told them what was on their plates. For the appearance was not taken away for them with the taste, but was divinely changed owing to the affection of the giver. Dom Ensfrid, dean of S. Andrew acted very much in the same way in my own time. You must remember this also that the power of distinguishing between foods by taste is much diminished by long disuse. For it is no wonder that Dom Theobald, the

abbot of Eberbach, who had never tasted flesh for all his sixty-six years in the Order, should have eaten it under the appearance of fish and never noticed the difference ; for the aforesaid Ensfrid put flesh before the monks instead of a turbot, and they all ate in ignorance.

Novice.—I should like to know more fully about such cases.

Monk.—The life of this venerable man was adorned with such great works of mercy, that it is worthy to be set upon a candlestick for all to see. The case about which you ask, and his other deeds, which I partly saw for myself and partly learned from others, I will relate to you faithfully. For I learnt letters in the very church in which he was dean, and deeply do I now regret that at the time I took so little trouble to search out his virtues.

CHAPTER V.

The life of Dom Ensfrid, dean of S. Andrew in Cologne.

Ensfrid was born in the diocese of Cologne, a man simple-minded and upright, and chiefly remarkable for his works of mercy. What sort of a life was his before he entered the priesthood or how he spent his youth I do not know. But that mercy grew up with him and flourished, this I gather from those acts of his that I am about to relate. That he was of teachable temper and eager to learn was plain from the result itself. For he was so well grounded in his boyhood, that as I heard from his own lips, he was as a young man head of the schools, and both by word and example instructed very many not only to be eager in learning, but what is of more importance to be zealous to lead a good life.

When he was ordained priest he undertook the charge of a church in Siegburg, one considered to be a good parish, i.e.,

rich in offerings, and here he began to turn his theories of life into practice. He did not live there as a stranger to his people, but his door lay always open to every comer. He was the father of widows, the consoler of orphans, the scourge of sinners.

Now he kept in his house several scholars and was of such dove-like simplicity that at the time when cherries were ripe, he said to his steward: "My good friend, give the boys leave to climb the trees and eat as many of the cherries as they like and as they can; you need not trouble to give them any other food because there is none they delight in so much." He said this not from any thought of grasping, but simply from the great affection of his heart. Now this had gone on for several days and though the licence conceded to the boys had been delightful to them as boys, his steward came to him and said: "Assuredly, sir, unless these lads eat some other food they will soon be ill"; and he agreed at once.

Later he became canon in the Church of S. Andrew at Cologne, and not long afterwards, owing to his holy life, he was raised to be dean. Now although his whole life was irreproachable and of shining purity, yet was he specially fervent in works of mercy. In the parish of S. Paul which belongs to the Church of S. Andrew, there was not a single poor widow whose affairs he did not know, and whom he did not help with his alms. So much bread was given from his table to those who begged from door to door, so much money from his hands was put into the treasury of Christ, i.e. into the hands of the poor, that it was a marvel to those who knew his annual income.

Now he had a nephew, Frederick by name, canon of the same church, who acted as his steward. He had often to upbraid his uncle for his reckless generosity, while the uncle in his turn upbraided his nephew for too much stinginess. For they shared all their expenses and this was why Frederick was much troubled because whatever the dean got hold of, he gave away secretly to the poor.

Once when Frederick, owing to his office of cellarer had a number of fine pigs which he killed and turned into hams, and hung them up in the kitchen to keep until they should be

needed ; the dean, who often looked into the kitchen, coveted very much this fine row of hams and since he could not get any of them from his nephew by begging, and did not like to take them openly, he thought out a holy trick, a pious trick, a trick well worthy of remembrance. As often as he found nobody in the kitchen, he went in ſtealthily ; or if there were any servants there, he sent them out, and climbed up the ſteps to the row of hams and cut out slices from the part of each ham which was next the wall, until he had taken about half of each. The front part however he left untouched so that the cutting of the reſt might escape unnoticed. This he did for many days and diſtributed the flesh thus abſtracted to widows, to any one in want, and to orphans. At length the theft of the household goods was discovered ; the thief was sought for and found without difficulty.

The clerk was furious ; the dean said nothing until the former complained that he had loſt what belonged to the brethren, and the supplies of the whole year ; and then the holy man tried to appease him with such words as he could, saying : " My good kinsman, it is surely better that you should suffer a little loss than that the poor should die of hunger. The Lord will give you a full reward." And with these words Frederick was appeased and upbraided him no more.

At another time when he was on his way to S. Gereon, I think, that he might be present at the feaſt of that martyr, a beggar followed him with importunate cries, and since he had nothing that he could possibly give him, he told the scholar who was accompanying him to go on a little way in front. Then he went aside into a corner by the church of the Blessed Mary, the mother of God, in a place where it was usual for the bishops to beſtow indulgences on the people on Palm Sunday, and because there was no other article of clothing he could take off, he unfaſtened his breeches, and in the sight of the beggar, let them fall. The man picked them up and went off rejoicing.

Now the saint desired to hide his act of charity, but God willed that it should not be hidden under a bushel, but placed upon a candleſtick to be an example for poſterity. For when he came back from S. Gereon and sat down by the fire, but

did not as usual lift up his cloak to warm his legs, his nephew Frederick said to him: "Lift up your cloak and warm your legs"; for it was very cold, and he was an old man. And when he replied: "No thank you, I think not"; Frederick added: "I am pretty sure that you have no breeches," making a guess at this from the good man's blushes. He did at last confess that he had lost them, but said no word of his charity. At this the clerk laughed, and it was he who told me the story.

Novice.—Why, this surpasses anything that can be read in the acts of S. Martin, for surely it is a much greater thing to part with one's breeches than to give half one's cloak.

Monk.—Because of this and other similar deeds of his, some said that they had never heard or read of any man who was filled with such marvellous compassion for the poor, such wonderful affection and mercy. He used to bestow his garments upon the poor without any sort of restraint, and when he suffered from the cold and other garments were sent to him, he would do the same thing with them. Always his heart seemed full of that saying of the Saviour: *Give and it shall be given unto you.* Dom Everard, of whom I remember we spoke in the ninetieth chapter of the fourth book, who was the venerable vicar of S. James' Church, had a great love for him, they were of one heart and mind in the Lord. Now when he wished to give Ensfrid any article of clothing, he used to say, in order that it might be of use to him for a little longer than usual, "I will lend you this garment."

Novice.—I think that a man who was so lavish towards the poor, must have been very liberal towards guests.

Monk.—With how great love he received them the following story will show. One day he invited to dinner some religious, I am not sure whether they were Cistercians or Premonstratensians; and he happened to have in the house no regular convent food or any fish; so he said to his cook: "We have no fish, and these men are simple-minded monks and very hungry; go and make a hash, take out all the bones and spice it well and then set it before them and say: 'Will you please to eat of this excellent turbot.'" And when he had done this, they, good simple men noticed nothing of the

pious fraud of their good simple host, and asked no questions, both for their rule of silence and also for conscience sake, but ate of what was placed before them as fish. The dish was almost empty, when one of them discovered a little pig's ear, and pointed it out to his neighbour ; the dean saw him do this and pretending indignation called out to him : " Eat and give God thanks ; monks ought not to be so curious ; do you suppose that a turbot has no ears?"

The devil who is the enemy of the human race was envious of such great virtues ; and so, in the hope of troubling him, he took visible shape and thrust himself into his presence and disappeared again after addressing him in these verses.

" Death holds his mirror up, that you may see
How little life or health is left for thee."

Do you notice the folly of this versifying devil? The very means he used to damp the ardour of the saint only stimulated him to further effort. Indeed his life lasted for about thirty years after this time, and he was all the more fervent in good works as he had been told that he was the nearer to death.

On a certain festival, Dom Adolphus, the dean of the cathedral, afterwards archbishop of Cologne, invited him to dinner ; but he declined saying that he was expecting some important guests. After mass, when the saint was hastening home, his fellow canon Godfrey, the secretary of the dean of the cathedral, was looking out of the window of the solar of the clergy house, and as he told me himself saw him with a number of beggars in this train, some of whom were lame and others blind. And when they found a difficulty in crossing the big stones which divide the street at this point, he saw that Ensfrid although he was already somewhat decrepit with age, stopped to offer a hand to each. Immediately the clerk called his master to the window and said : " Look my lord, there are the important guests whom our dean said that he must go to meet "; and they were both not a little edified.

I myself saw him carry out a work of compassion of very much the same kind : on the anniversary of Dom Bruno, the Archbishop of Cologne, when all the conventional churches were gathering to the Church of S. Panteleon, the martyr,

which Bruno himself had built ; after mass had been said for his soul, the various priors entered the refectory to dine together according to custom, and a number of beggars followed Dom Ensfrid as far as the door of the refectory. The caterer was of course anxious to admit him and keep out the beggars ; but Ensfrid grew very angry and cried out : " I will certainly not come in to-day without these friends of mine," for well the wise man knew that the poor are the friends of God and the doorkeepers of heaven (Luke xvi. 9).

This too is the reason why when once he had been asked to stand by the relics and urge people as they came in to give alms to the restoration of the church, which was at that time in his charge, he addressed them as follows, " My good friends, you see plainly how splendid are these restorations that we are making, and you will do well in giving your alms towards them, but nevertheless let me tell you that you will do still better and more wisely if you give them to the poor." This exhortation was heard at the time by one monk Frederick of blessed memory, as he was entering the Church of S. Andrew with certain knights and he often afterwards told me the story.

He used also to feed from his stipend God-fearing persons that he might have a share in their merits. And so it came about that he supported from his prebend all her life that venerable recluse of our Order, the lady Heilige, who was as truly holy as her name and whose cell was attached to the monastery of S. Andrew ; for that blessed one consistently refused to take alms from anyone else. Further he was accustomed to call the poor his heavenly treasure houses, *whom no moth could corrupt, whom no thieves could break through or steal* (Matt. vi. 19). Wherefore as we have already shown, he cared far more to comfort the poor than to increase buildings, or treasures or other perishable ornaments of churches. When he dined alone, he used to bring to his table poor lads whose hands were ulcerated and sadly neglected, and used to make them with them feed from his own plate.

Novice.—Very wonderful and admirable are the piety, humility and simplicity of this dean.

Monk.—I will tell you something you will wonder at still more. He had a dear friend who lived near him, a citizen of Cologne named Lambert. This man was supping one day with Godfrey, the secretary we spoke of before, and they were talking together of the charity of Dom Ensfrid, when Lambert said in my hearing: "Let me tell you how he treated me. Once he had invited my wife and myself to supper with him. While we were sitting at table, we had been for some time expecting a dish to be brought in, for there was nothing in front of us except dry bread. And because I knew well his little ways, I beckoned to one of the servants and whispered: 'Tell me, my good fellow, are we not going to have anything to eat?' He replied: 'We haven't a thing in the house; the fact is that a good supper had been prepared for you, but my master came into the kitchen just before we served it up and divided among the poor all that we had prepared, in spite of anything that we could say.' I was much amused at this and sent the same servant to my house and he brought back enough food to satisfy all the guests."

Another day I went into his kitchen and saw a number of geese turning on spits before the fire, and I said to myself: "Certainly this good dean makes very good provision for his household." But as soon as the geese were cooked, he himself came in, cut them up, and arranging portions on the dishes, sent the whole of them to poor widows. Often geese and chickens were sent to him, sometimes officially, owing to his position as dean, and sometimes as gifts, because many loved him, for they knew well his benevolence.

And here is another mark of his charity: whenever he wished to send any of these either to his brethren or to any other of his neighbours, he would have them killed before he sent them in order that they might be eaten at once.

He had so much compassion for the poor, as I said above, that he sometimes did what human judgment might condemn. One of the priests of S. Andrew told me that there was a certain citizen of Cologne who was less fond of his wife than he ought to have been, and often treated her harshly; on this account she stole from him a large sum of money. When

her husband charged her with the theft she denied it boldly, and then being afraid of being found out she threw it into the cesspool. Afterwards she repented of what she had done, and she went to the dean and confessed to him the theft and the cause of it. I believe that the holy man tried to persuade her to restore the money to her husband ; but because she had sworn to him that she had not taken it, she did not dare to do this, being afraid that he would ill-treat her still more if he knew. Whereupon the dean said : " If I can get hold of the money without implicating you, are you willing that it should be given to the poor?" She replied that this was what she desired above all things, and a few days later the dean called upon the citizen and said : " Will you give me leave to have your cesspool cleaned out, and if by the grace of God I should find anything there, will you allow me to take it?" The other, knowing him to be a holy man, and thinking that God had made some revelation to him, gave him leave. The cesspool was cleaned out and the money was found, and within a few days was distributed to the poor by the hands of the man of God.

Novice.—I think that a detractor might certainly find in this an opportunity for carping.

Monk.—There are three points which I think excuse him from sin. The first that the money belonged to the wife as well as to the husband ; secondly, that it was lost and could not have been found except by the woman's confession ; and thirdly, that he distributed it to the poor ; and last of all, the charity which instigated him. Priests are often accustomed to give permission to wives to take money from miserly and uncharitable husbands and give it to the poor.

But there was something else which he did that laid him much more open to censure. Once when he had nothing to eat, he went into the bakehouse of the brethren, where the loaves were set out upon a table ready for distribution, and asked the baker to which of the brethren each batch of loaves belonged, and when he had learned from the baker the ownership of each, he ordered the loaves of those he knew to be rich to be carried off to his own house, saying : " They have abundance and I have nothing at all to eat."

Novice.—How can such an act as this be excused.

Monk.—There are many things lawful to saints which could not be permitted to other men (2 Cor. iii. 17). This is why the authorities say: "So long as you are in a state of grace you may do what you will." Therefore he is excused by his sanctity, by his necessity, by the words of authority and by brotherhood. Sanctity, because it was his love for the poor that brought him to want; necessity, which knows no law, and concerning which Rudolph, the scholasticus of Cologne Cathedral used to say to his pupils: "Before I would die of hunger, I would snatch something to eat even from the feet of the Crucifix." He was excused to a certain extent by his position, because he was a dean and a sort of father to his brethren; by brotherhood, because he considered that they all had everything in common, just as he had made his own property common to all.

Now when from the failure of his bodily strength and from his great age, he felt that the day of his death was pressing upon him, in order that no earthly possession might encumber his humble soul on its homeward way, he sold his house, and with his own hands divided the proceeds, not amongst his relations or friends, but amongst Christ's poor. For well he knew that his fellow canons, even the most trustworthy, might easily be less trustworthy after his death. His house was bought by Conrad, a priest and canon of the same church. After the tranaction Conrad came to him and said: "Sir, I should like to have my house," to whom he replied with great simplicity: "My good Conrad, I am a decrepit old man and shall not live long; be patient for a little while and you shall certainly have it. Where would you wish me to live for the short time remaining to me?" The good Conrad, making a virtue of necessity, waited for his death with great patience.

The blessed saint had a heart of such tenderness that often when he was sitting in the portico of the church and saw poor men pass by, burdened with the moss which they had collected from the woods, he would buy it himself, not that he in the least wanted it, but simply to deliver the poor from their toil.

Our fellow monk, Rener, who was once scholasticus of that church, also told me that one day when a beggar laden with

bellows for sale, and, unable to sell them, came to rest in the same portico, Ensfrid said to him: "Rener, buy those bellows"; and when he replied: "But, sir, I do not want them," he answered: "Then buy them and give them to your friends." Whereupon Rener bought them, knowing full well that it was the dean's compassion which urged him to this request.

His heart was so tender that he could not bear to see anyone struck or abused if he could prevent it. One day he was passing the schools and heard the cries of a certain canon who had grievously transgressed, and who was being held down by four scholars for a flogging, immediately he rushed panting into the schools like a lion, and going up to his fellow canon, the scholasticus, in the sight of us all he lifted up his stick and delivered the lad from his hands. "What are you doing," he cried, "you tyrant? You are appointed to teach the boys, not to murder them"; and the other covered with confusion made no reply.

How great his patience was the following story will show. One day he was sitting in the church porch according to his custom, I think between the None and Vespers, when a certain Scothus, a miserable fellow, who was frequently drunk and who was altogether unworthy of the dignity of the priesthood, came up to him, nobody else being present, seized him by the hood, drew out a knife and said in a threatening voice: "Give me some money or I will kill you." But by the providence of God there came in a young and active canon who pulled off Scothus very roughly. But when he wished to kill him, judging him worthy of death, this most gentle-hearted saint restrained him saying: "Do not be angry, my brother, take care not to hurt him, for it was only a joke."

Never did he return evil for evil, because of the dovelike simplicity that ruled in his heart. Yet full as he was of wonderful tenderness, as we have often said, he nevertheless burnt with a great zeal for justice. Once he happened to meet the abbess of the convent of the eleven thousand virgins. Before her there went clerks robed in the grey mantles of the nuns, behind her followed hand-maidens and attendants, who filled the air with a clamour of foolish words. But behind the dean there followed a crowd of beggars asking alms of him.

THE CLASS-ROOM AND THE ROD

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The holy man, inflamed with a zeal for discipline, cried aloud in the hearing of all: "O lady abbess, it would better become your profession and better honour your religion, if you were followed by paupers as I am, rather than by buffoons." At which she blushed deeply, but did not presume to make any reply to such a man.

So great was the love of justice in him, that one day when someone in his hearing was speaking of the evil life of the clergy, he replied at once: "It is all one how they live," as if he had said: From an evil root no good tree can spring. For he had known few clerks who had entered the church in the right way, i.e. who had not been introduced by nepotism i.e. pushed in by their relations, or by favouritism, i.e. thrust forward by the power of great men; or by simony, to wit, by payment of money, or in return for some dishonourable service rendered.

Novice.—This vice holds great sway among the clergy in these days.

Monk.—That is true, especially in those churches in which prelates are appointed to draw their salaries without being elected. Indeed Rudolph, bishop of Liège took so much pride in simony that once, when he had sold a prebend of a certain church of his, he clasped the money to his breast and said in the presence of many bystanders: "I have greatly enriched the church of Liège and have increased its revenues. For the prebend which my predecessors sold for ten marks, I have brought up to forty." And because the saint knew that few men entered upon their canonries with a simple heart, he judged that few lived in them with simplicity.

And with this zeal for justice he had also an eager love for regular discipline. For after him even to this day there has never arisen in that church a dean under whom discipline flourished so vigorously. Even at the very close of his life, right up to the day of his death, he would never suffer himself to omit any weekly observance of Divine service. Often when celebrating mass in the convent he had to be held up by the arms of others lest he should fall. On feast days, he, like everybody else, chanted the Alleluia at the steps.

When others left the church, he rarely went out of it, unless to go and take food ; and sitting down before the altar of the Holy Cross he would stay there hour after hour.

In public he was always so ready to receive penitents, that he would frequently sit with them in the portico and would read to them the manuscripts and comfort them, and make them write out their prayers and petitions. His humility was so great, that though he was far above all both in age and dignity, he would always, except on special feasts, choose almost the lowest place in the choir.

His robes were always very common and humble, neither grey nor coloured but simply made of natural sheep's wool, and he always wore a cloak of the same material.

Novice.—Why is that you tell me no miracle of so great a saint.

Monk.—There is none greater than John the Baptist ; yet we do not read that he performed any miracle such as the gospel relates were done by the betrayer Judas (Mark vi. 13). Indeed to some of those who now perform miracles in the name of Christ, He Himself will say in the last day: *" I know not whence ye are ; depart from me all ye workers of iniqnity* (Luke xiii. 27). For miracles are not of the substance of sanctity, but rather its signs. The Lord, willing to reward his worn-out soldier after his toil, called him to glory as follows. On Easter Eve when he was expected at the solemn service because it was his week, suddenly his strength began to fail. The before-mentioned Rener was sent for, who discovered by feeling his pulse that he was at the very gate of death, and advised him at once to receive Extreme Unction, and placed in his mouth a medicinal lozenge to relieve him. This he immediately spat out, saying: " I shall be celebrating mass in the convent " ; and Rener replied: " You will never celebrate mass again in this life." When he heard this he besought that he might receive Extreme Unction, and then joined the brethren in chanting the Psalms and Litany. About three o'clock he gave up his spirit to be with Christ in the company of the spirits of just men made perfect. When he was buried on the following Easter Monday, Dom Everard, the vicar of St. James,

whose virtuous life I have described to you in the ninety-eighth chapter of the fourth book, bore this witness concerning him in the hearing of the many: "This day" he said, "we have here committed to the earth the most holy man who has ever lived upon it."

And as the question of miracles has been raised, I may tell you that after his death there was no lack of signs and wonders. A certain priest and stipendiary of that church, named Adam, told me himself that once when he was tormented with very violent pains in the head, he went to the tomb of this saint and prayed as follows: "Lord" he said, "grant me some relief from my pain for the sake of the merits of this saint of Thine." Forthwith his prayer was heard, and he who had come thither in sickness, departed in full health. Many other works well worthy of recording, did this holy man perform, but I omit them because I have no room to describe them.

Novice.—Would that all deans were like him so simple-hearted and so holy.

Monk.—I call to mind how another dean, a simple-hearted man and a worthy servant of God, some of whose virtues were lately told me by Master John, the dean of Aix, who was born in the same town in which that holy dean lived, and I will tell you what I heard of him.

CHAPTER VI.

Also of the life of Dom Herman, dean of the Church of Hildesheim.

There was in our own time in the church of Hildesheim a good man and dear to God, by name Herman, full of many virtues and works of virtue. In sacred vigils, in prayer fastings, and works of mercy all his desire was to do the will of God. The enemy of the human race, angered by these

works of his, tried to hinder him in every fashion, so that the holy man was accustomed to say to him: "O, devil" full of all malice, why dost thou so much harass me?"

Once when he was planting in his orchard a little tree and was grafting on to the trunk two shoots, one of these dried up, but the other proved healthy. Thereupon as he earnestly desired a sign from Almighty God, he prayed: "I beseech Thee Lord, if it be Thy Will that I should become a priest, cause this dry shoot to live again." Behold the wonderful mercy of God! forthwith that dry shoot began to flourish with sap and in due time brought forth fruit. Thus the Divine power which confirmed in his office Aaron, the first priest, by causing a dry rod to flower contrary to nature, showed by a similar miracle that this man was worthy of the priesthood.

When after his death a certain clerk of his, Everard by name, on whom he had bestowed a church, became blind, and prayed daily at Herman's tomb, relying upon his holiness and pity, and begging that he might receive his sight for the sake of the merits of his master, the holy Herman appeared to him visibly one day and said: "What will thou that I should do for thee?" and when the blind man replied: "Master that I may receive my sight," the saint said to him in the very words of the gospel: "*Receive thy sight for thy faith hath saved thee*" (Luke xviii. 42). That very hour the clerk received his sight, and so long as he lived gave thanks to the Lord, who had so glorified His saint, as he himself had experienced.

Later, when a certain sick man had been carried to the Martyr's Memorial and had not been healed, by the advice of a friend he made his prayer to the same St. Herman and was cured. It happened that this man entered the church on the anniversary of Dom Herman, and asked why all the bells were ringing and received this answer: "To day is the anniversary of Dom Herman, formerly dean of this church, a good and upright man, and a mass is to be said for him in the convent." The man replied: "I beg you to show me his tomb." And when this was done, he stood there for a long time praying with much devotion, and the

precentor of the church, noticing this, made opportunity for a private conversation with him, and asked and learnt the reason of his prayer. And so by the mouth of a ſtranger his merits were known so that the brethren began to invoke as their patron saint him whom they had formerly looked upon merely as their dean.

Novice.—Such things are rare nowadays.

Monk.—I prefer the works of piety of St. Ensfrid to the miracles recorded of St. Herman. For the former, as I said, make a man a saint, while the latter only show that he is a saint.

Novice.—Indeed I heartily agree with you ; and if you know any other works of simplicity I beseech you to tell me them.

Monk.—I will tell you the ſtory of a man, who had the ſimpleſt of natures, and by this you will learn clearly how pleasing to God is the holy and prudent simplicity which comes by grace.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the simplicity of Werinbold, canon of St. Gereon in Cologne.

In the church of St. Gereon, the martyr, in the city of Cologne there was a certain canon, Werinbold by name, of noble birth, and very rich in eccleſiaſtical preferments. He was a man of ſo great simplicity, that he never could grasp the sum total of anything, except ſo far that he was able to tell whether it was odd or even. At one time he had a great number of hams hanging up in his kitchen, and to prevent them from being ſtolen, he used to go and count them as follows: "Here is a ham and here is its fellow, here is a ham and here is its wife, and so on to the end. One of them having been ſtolen by the diſhoneſty of his servants

when next he went in and counted his hams in his usual way, he discovered them to be odd in number, and cried out: "I have lost one of my hams." The servants, secretly laughing, answered him: "We shall soon find it, Sir." And when he had gone out, and they had again made the number even by stealing another, and he, coming back, counted them again and found them even, he said very kindly to the servants: "Alas! my friends to think that I might have kept silence too long."

When the servants wished to have a feast they used to say to him: "Sir, why do you not take greater care of yourself, for truly you are very weak." And when he said: "How do you know this, my good lads?" they answered: "We see it clearly by your hair, because it is so rough;" and so they put him to bed and regaled themselves with all kinds of delicacies which they pretended to have prepared for his sickness.

A certain unscrupulous and clever rustic, hearing of so great simplicity, pretended that he had been his original servant and his father's before him. "Sir," he said, "I cannot permit your affairs to be so neglected. For I am your servant, and it is right that I should truly serve your honour, and faithfully guard all your possessions." To sum up, everything was handed over to this man's charge; and at night when his master went to bed, he used to sit down by the fire with the other servants and drink to his heart's content. Once when he brought in by chance a jester, who by the sweetness of his music had roused the sleeper, the servant ran to his master and found him just getting up, and he cried: "Where are you going, Sir? When he replied: "I hear the most beautiful music, but I do not know where it comes from," the serving man went on: "Go back to your bed; it is only the monks of Deutz who are playing upon their organ."

Novice.—I think there is great wickedness in thus mocking the simple.

Monk.—There can be no doubt of that; remember what holy Job says: *The just upright man is laughed to scorn* (Job xii. 4). Upon this passage Gregory comments: The

simplicity of the upright is mocked, because the virtue of simplicity is considered foolish by the worldly wise. For everything that is done in innocence is thought by them to be pure foolishness, and whatever in their actions is approved by truth sounds fatuous to worldly wisdom.

Novice.—Indeed this man seems to me to have been foolish rather than simple, because simplicity ought not to be divorced from prudence.

Monk.—Prudence consists in guarding against evils beforehand, and that was a virtue he did not lack. And so it came to pass by the Divine Will that he was made cellarer in the church of St. Gereon, whose revenues are many and great. And as we read of holy Joseph, though he knew nothing but the bread which he ate, and that only scantily, the Lord, who loves simplicity, supplied this defect of his and blessed everything to which he set his hand.

One day, when he entered the granary of the convent, he saw several cats running hither and thither amongst the corn, and could scarcely wait for the meeting of the Chapter, but threw himself at the feet of the dean, and begged to be released from his office and to give up his keys. When the dean and the brethren said: "Good master Werinbold, what is the matter? why do you do this"? he replied: "Because I cannot bear to look upon the losses of the convent." "What losses"? they asked; and he said: "To-day I saw several cats in the granary, and they will devour all your corn." When they said: "Cats do not eat corn, but only protect it"; yet for all their entreaties they could scarcely induce him to take back the keys. They indeed had learnt by experience that the Lord blessed them for the sake of his simplicity.

Once when he had money of different coinage from different estates, one of his servants stole part of it and ran away. When he found this out and was grievously lamenting, he answered those who were trying to console him: "It is not the loss that I am bemoaning, but the danger to the thief. The coins are not such as will pass in exchange, the wretched fellow must be caught, and if he is condemned on their account, I shall be guilty of his death."

Novice.—We should not choose as cellarers such men as this now-a-days.

Monk.—Times are changed and men also. Yet even to-day it often happens that under simple-minded prelates and officials Religious houses have great outward prosperity, and come to poverty under those who are clever and practised in all worldly skill.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the simplicity of Christian who was cellarer in Brauweile.

In the monastery of St. Nicholas in the town of Brauweile there was a very simple-minded monk named Christian, who was appointed cellarer by the abbot. But God, to whom upright simplicity is dear, so directed all that he did that at the time when he was in office the convent flourished more abundantly in all necessary things than ever before or since.

Very often his servants and hired men stole his corn and wine and many other things, and carried them away to their wives and children. And when he found this out and sometimes saw it with his own eyes, he pretended in the great pity of his heart not to see it, saying within himself: "They are poor and in want, and the brethren will not lack any necessaries."

The simple man is often compared to an actor or jester, for as their words or actions would often be displeasing in the mouth or hands of one who is not a jester, and would be worthy of punishment, yet when the same things are said or done by jesters they give pleasure; and so it is with the simple-minded. If I may put it in such a way the simple-minded are the jesters of God and the Holy Angels. But if their deeds are sometimes done by those who are not simple-minded there is no doubt that they are displeasing to God who delights in them when they are done by the simple.

THREE MEDIEVAL HOUSES IN COLOGNE

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CHAPTER IX.

Of a monk of Burscheid.

In Burscheid there was a monk so simple-minded that almost every day he used to sit among the paupers in the baths which there flow naturally warm before the gate of the monastery, and used to rub the backs of the poor and wash their heads and cleanse their clothes. Now both the abbot and his brethren used frequently and sharply to upbraid him for this, but he did not desist but answered very simply as follows: " But if I leave off doing this, who will do it instead for the poor " ? Now if anybody else, without the excuse of simplicity should have shown himself so presumptuous in response to the orders of his abbot, there can be no doubt that he would have offended God grievously (Eccles. v. 1).

Moreover that the works of this simple-minded man were pleasing to God will be made plain by the following miracle. Once when he went to Cologne to preach there, he was entertained in the house of a certain Abraham. That night when the bell for matins was ringing in the church of the blessed Peter, he got up and as he was hastening thither, he saw that the window of the upper room where he was sleeping was open, and thinking it to be the door he went through it and so came to the church after being helped to the ground in wonderful fashion. As soon as matins was over, he came back and when he knocked at the door of the house, and was asked by those who let him in whence he came, and how he had got out of the house, they discovered from his reply that he had gone out through the window and not by the door. He, himself, however was quite unconscious of any miracle. I myself have seen this window, and it is so high above the ground, that there cannot be any doubt that he was set down by the Holy Angels (Ps. xli. 11, 12). The following story will show how faithful a guardian of the simple the Lord is.

CHAPTER X.

The life of the blind Engilbert.

There was a certain simple-hearted man, Engilbert by name, born in the province of Zülpich who died a few years ago. This man was born blind, and became well known in several provinces owing to the various gifts with which Divine grace illuminated his inner man, and was venerated by many great personages of either sex. He used to go about in a simple cape and woollen tunic, walking upon bare feet both in summer and winter, and, with a boy to guide him, used thus often to visit very distant shrines of the saints. He never ate flesh nor slept in a bed, but at night lay only upon a little straw or hay. I myself have seen many of his good works, and he edified many both by word and example.

When he was a young man, he was passing the night in the house of his mother's sister a wealthy matron, and had chosen his bed amongst her servants ; in the middle of the night two thieves broke through the wall close to where he was lying and came in. These men uncovered the fire, lit a candle, broke open the lockers, and talked fearlessly together. When Engilbert heard them and felt sure that they were thieves, he tried to waken the servants sleeping on either side of him, but unsuccessful in this, he took out his knife and cut through the top of the bench, and so armed himself with a club. And because, being blind, he could not see them he went towards them under God's guidance, following the sound of their voices, and brandishing his club first with one hand and then with the other, and striking like a madman in every direction as far as he could reach, he drove them out of the house. He followed them as far as the door, which he barricaded with a ladder ; and they, when they found themselves outside the house, and discovered that no one was awake except this man alone, were angry at so ignominious an expulsion, and after taking counsel together, forthwith they strove to get in again. The movement of the ladder showed this to Engilbert, so he placed one

end of the ladder under a big chest in which the grain was kept and which stood opposite the door, and held the other end with both hands. Now when they crept in on hands and knees, Engilbert pressed heavily with the ladder upon their backs, since they were crawling on their faces, and held it down so strongly that he took from them, not only all power of advance, but even of retreat. Now when they found themselves held as it were under a yoke, being in terror that in the morning they must be caught, they begged for mercy. When they had sworn with most terrible oaths that they would not injure his person, or try again to break into that house, he let them go. In the morning Engilbert gave information of the theft, but none of his neighbours sleeping near could be awakened by any means. Then search was made for signs of witchcraft, for they knew that this must have happened by some such power, and they found above the door hanging from the roof what looked like the backbone of a human corpse. When this was taken away, all at once awoke.

Novice.—These are great things to have been done by a blind and simple man.

Monk.—Greater is what follows because it has to do with the saving of souls. Many years afterwards these same thieves urged by the fame and the virtues of the said Engilbert, and touched as I believe by his prayers, came to him, confessed who they were, and thenceforward led a religious life. This marvellous deed and certain others about which we shall speak later were told me by others, and when I asked him if they were true, he testified quite simply that they had taken place just as related. *And because the secret of the Lord is with* (Prov. iii. 32) the simple, He gave him the spirit of prophecy to recompense the loss of outward light with the brightness of the inward eye. Once when he was invited to visit the Duchess of Saxony, the wife of Duke Henry, a very religious matron he foretold to her, amongst other things, that one of her sons would become Emperor. And this we saw afterwards fulfilled in Otto who succeeded Henry in the Empire. He after his election fell into great tribulations and when everybody else despaired of him, he was comforted by this same blind man, who assured him

that everything which had been pre-ordained by God should be fulfilled to the smallest detail.

Before this when Hildegund of Giemenich, a spiritually-minded widow, was terrified for her sons, Arnold and his brothers, owing to the quarrel of the two Counts of our country, and begged him to pray to God that they might be kept safe, he answered: "Do not be anxious about this quarrel, which will soon be at an end; another far greater trouble is at the door, by which not only your sons but the whole world will be shaken." This was fulfilled under the Otto whom we have already mentioned and Philip his rival in the Kingdom.

One day when he was walking through a certain street in Cologne, there met him several honourable matrons of that city on their way to the church. While they were talking together he said: "Please stop a moment, ladies." And while they stood still, he went on: "Will she who was speaking just now be good enough to repeat what she was saying." And while the ladies were hesitating as to whom he meant, they all remained silent while he repeated the exact words which had been used. When he came to Astrada, who to-day is a nun in the convent of S. Walburgis, as soon as he heard her voice, Engilbert replied prophetically in the hearing of all: "This woman with her whole house will be converted to Christ;" which was fulfilled very soon afterwards. For she, with her husband, her son, her daughter, who to-day is an abbess in the afore-mentioned convent, and with her man-servant and maid-servant joined our Order. You see how swiftly, by opening the mouth of the aforesaid woman, *The Lord told her* His will *in her ear* (1 Sam. ix. 15).

He was often accustomed to say much about the condition of souls, and sometimes, it is said, a human spirit of error deceived him. And this is not to be wondered at; for not always did prophets speak with the spirit of prophecy, as for instance *Nathan* (1 Chron. xvii.) who by his spirit exhorted David to an act, which the Holy Spirit immediately afterwards forbade to be performed.

On a certain feast of Our Lady, when his mother's sister, whom we mentioned before, he was going in the evening to

a village close at hand for matins and said to him: "Engilbert, come with me to-morrow morning"; that same night before dawn he heard the voice of someone knocking at the door, and saying: "Come, Engilbert, let us go to matins." And although he did not recognise the voice, nevertheless he got up and followed. He was led into a certain church where he heard Matins, Prime, Terce, Sext and the None. Then when he returned alone, and was asked where he had been, he replied: "Never have I heard such beautiful singing, such sweet melodies, such a glorious Mass as I have heard to-day."

The same thing happened to him again the following year; for he had not yet put on the Religious dress. One night he was taken from his bed, carried away and set down near the castle of Manbach in a very terrible solitary place. Here his soul left his body and wandered round all the corners and all the ups and downs of this wilderness, and took such careful notice of everything that many were astonished when he afterwards told what he had seen. As his soul was returning, a demon met it on the way and said: "Your body belongs to me." When he had crossed himself and called upon the Holy Mother of God, the demon went on: "The middle part of your head is mine at any rate, because it was washed when the Vesper bell was ringing on Saturday." And forthwith he hurled at him a lump of pitch, which was afterwards cleaned away only with great labour by many helpers.

When he was on his death bed his mother said to him weeping: "O dearest son you are now dying and leaving me in very grievous sickness." He replied: "St. Mary will deliver you, my mother." And at the very moment of his death, she was healed of a very severe illness under which she had laboured for nine years.

I have read in the book of the visions of the blessed Aczelina, that among the heavenly mansions, she saw an empty abode of wonderful beauty and glory, and it was told her that this was prepared for a certain blind man of Germany; and forthwith I recognised that this brother Engilbert was meant.

Novice.—So far as I understand, a simple heart is very dear to God.

Monk.—Not only is it pleasing to God, but also to men ; it sometimes happens that it has more weight in their eyes than any worldly wisdom.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Dom Peter, the abbot of Clairvaux, by whose simplicity his adversaries were confounded and renounced the property for which they had been contending.

Dom Peter, abbot of Clairvaux, who had lost an eye from sickness, was a holy man, and an imitator of St. Peter the Apostle, both in name and fact ; he was called the son of a dove, because he was of such great and pure simplicity.

Now a certain knight was contending with him and his brethren about certain property ; and they had agreed upon a day on which the knight should come to terms with the abbot, or else a law suit should be begun before the judge. On the appointed day the knight came with his friends ; there came also the abbot, bringing with him only one simple monk ; and they came, not on horses, but on foot. And since the venerable abbot was a lover of peace and poverty and a despiser of all worldly property, he said to the knight in the presence of all : " You are a Christian man, and if you will give your word that this property, about which we are disputing, is yours and really belongs to you, your word will be quite enough for me." The other, who loved the good things of the world more than the simple truth, replied : " In truth I assure you that this property is really mine," whereupon the abbot replied : " Then let it be yours, in future I will make no claim upon it," and so went back to Clairvaux. The knight also returned to his

wife, delighted with his victory, and told her in every detail what the abbot had said to him, and his own reply ; whereupon his wife was terrified at words so honest and simple, and made answer: "You have acted treacherously against the holy abbot ; and Divine vengeance will surely befal us, and unless you restore their property to the monastery, I dare no longer live with you." Then he too was struck with terror, went to Clairvaux, renounced all claim to the property of his own accord, and asked pardon for the unwarrantable vexation that he had caused the holy abbot. That blessed man visited him in Rode in the days of some of our elder brethren. He was also noble according to the flesh, and a relation of Philip, king of France, who greatly loved his holy simplicity.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Philip, King of the French, who was edified by the simple silence of the holy abbot of St. Victor, and constrained his adversaries.

Our fellow-monk Constantine told me that when he was studying in Paris, John the abbot of St. Victor, who was a German by race, was pleading before King Philip against several nobles and great men for an important freehold. He had brought with him several brethren, who were skilled both in learning and in law, and his adversaries had advocates well practised in trials ; now while they were bandying arguments on one side and the other, the abbot simply sat still and did not utter a single word in reply to what was alleged, so that he seemed rather to be busy with praying. When the King had thought over this he said to the abbot: "My lord abbot, why do you say nothing?" and when the abbot replied with much gentleness and great simplicity: "Sire I do not know what to say," the King was much

edified and moved, and continued: "Go back to your monastery and I will speak for you." After his departure, the King pretended anger and said to the knights: "I order you, under penalty of my displeasure not to trouble this holy abbot again." And so it came about that the property, which the brethren could not obtain for all their complaints, the unaided simplicity of the abbot obtained from the King (Ex. xiv. 14). I will show you further by other examples how dear to this same King was such virtuous simplicity.

CHAPTER XIII.

Also of the same King, who commended the Chapter of Laon for the simple way in which they presented to him the bishop they had elected.

It happened once that on the death of their bishop, the Chapter of Laon chose to succeed him a simple canon from among their brethren, and presented him to the king in these words: "Sire, we present to you Dom Almeric, whom we have elected." This happened to be his name. The King made no reply, but thought over the manner of this presentation and said at last: "Who is it that you present to me?" and they answered: "Dom Almeric." Then the King: "Do you wish to say anything further?" They were frightened lest by chance the King might be displeased by their choice or by the words of their presentation, and they answered: "Nothing, Sire." Then the King said: "Rarely have I heard such a presentation as this. When anyone has been presented to me as having been elected, his dignities have been expressed by the electors in some such words as these: "Sire, we present to you Dom N. our archdeacon," or provost or dean or scholasticus as the case might be. I confess to you that I am very much pleased by so simple a presentation, and for this reason I hope and believe that

this election is in accordance with the will of God. Do you know how elections have formerly been celebrated for the dignities that have been recounted? If it has been a scholasticus, he has been chosen bishop because he has upheld the rights of his fellow-canons, or because of his learning, or because of the many friends he has made ; if he were a dean, by hypocritically hiding the excesses of his brethren, and the friends and relations, by whom he has been promoted, have been introduced ; if an archdeacon or provost, he has been thrust in rather than elected, as a man of noble birth and by the influence of his relations. Behold, this is the reason why the heads of the church are so weak." Then turning to the bishop-elect, he said : " Dom Almeric, because your election seems to have been simple, reasonable and canonical, I will never fail you whenever you have need of me." Our fellow monk Lambert, who told me this, said that he was in Paris at the time. But what and how great was the affection of this King for the simple-hearted will be shown effectively by the following act of his.

CHAPTER XIV.

Also of the same King, who promoted a simple monk to be abbot of S. Denys.

Three years before this, on the death of the abbot of S. Denys, the Apostle of the Franks, when that very rich abbacy was vacant, and there were many aspirants to it, there came to King Philip the provost who seemed to be the most powerful man in the community, and asked to be made abbot, saying : " Sire, here are five hundred pounds that I offer to you in order that you may be favourable to me in the matter of this abbacy." The King made no promises to him, but raising him to the height of his hopes by the acceptance of the simoniacal gift replied : " Give the money secretly to

my chamberlain. When the provoſt retired, feeling sure of the royal favour, the cellarer, who knew nothing of this, also went to the King and with the same object as the provoſt offered a similar quantity of money, and the King gave him the same reply. Laſt of all came the unfaithful cuſtodian of the treasury, offering the King five hundred pounds for the abbacy, and received the same reply as the others. And though the King, as a prudent man, had disguised his feelings, nevertheleſs he was grievously displeased by the ambition of those three monks and by the vice of private property, and especially by the execrable theft, for he knew well that the money offered had been taken from the monaſtery funds.

Then he assigned a day for the convent, on which he would choose their abbot, because the appointment had fallen into his hands. When the King had taken his seat in the chapter house and opened the proceedings with words denouncing simony, he looked round eagerly and considered the behaviour of the monks before him, and he noticed that the three already mentioned, viz., the provoſt, the cellarer and the sacriſtan showed the greateſt expectation, each one hoping from moment to moment that the abbacy was to be offered to him. And although they were so full of hope nevertheleſs all were disappointed in their expectation. For the King, noticing a certain simple monk, sitting in the corner of the chapter-house, and altogether regardless of any proſpects of the abbacy received an inspiration from on high and ordered him to ſtand up. When he ſtood up modeſtly in the presence of his prince, the King said to him: "Sir, I now hand over to you the abbacy of S. Denys." When he heard this, that simple man declined to consent to the King's order, indeed he boldly refused, asserting that he was a person humble, incapable of public office, and looked down upon, and altogether unworthy of so great a dignity and quite unequal to it. But the more he belittled himself, the more he commended himself to the King, who finally compelled him to accept. Afterwards he added: "Sire, this monaſtery is bound by many debts, and there is no means of paying." Then the King smiled and answered: "See, I will give at

once fifteen hundred pounds, and when it is necessary, I will lend you more and also give you both help and advice." Forthwith he ordered his chamberlain to hand over to him the money we mentioned above. I believe he is still alive, and perchance that house is better governed by him than it would have been by those who had aspired to its rule. A similar story to this also occurs to me.

CHAPTER XV.

Of a simple monk to whom the Emperor Frederick gave an abbacy because of a needle.

Some time ago in the days of the Emperor Frederick, the grandfather of the reigning Frederick, one of the imperial abbeys fell vacant; two men were elected, and when the monks could not agree, one of whom took a large sum of money, which he had collected in the monastery, and offered it to Frederick, that he might take his part.

The Emperor took the money and gave his promise, and afterwards he learnt that the other candidate was a man of good life and simple and well-ordered, and he began to take counsel with his friends, how he might get rid of the unworthy candidate, and confirm the election of him who had been chosen for his virtues.

And one of his counsellors said to him: "Sire, I have heard that every monk is bound by his rule to carry a needle. When you are sitting in the chapter-house say to that candidate of irregular life that you wish him to lend you his needle, in order to take a splinter out of one of your fingers, and when he proves to have none, you will find an occasion of disallowing him owing to his irregularity.

Now when this was done and the man had no needle the King said to the other: "Sir, lend me your needle;" and

when he immediately produced it, perhaps having been forewarned, the Emperor went on: "You are a monk, upright in keeping the rules of your Order and so you are worthy of this great honour. I had intended to give the honour to your opponent; but his irregularity has shown him unworthy. He that is careless in that which is least will be careless in important matters." By such sophistry did the Emperor get rid of the wordly-wise monk and promote his simple brother to be abbot.

Novice.—I did not know till now that there was so much virtue in a needle.

Monk.—It was not in the needle that the virtue lay, it was only the sign of virtue, that is, of humility, in the monk. He carried it for the purpose of mending his garments if they became torn.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of an abbot whom the Emperor Otto commended for the sake of a needle.

The Emperor Otto, the predecessor of the younger Frederick now reigning, was one day talking with three abbots of our Order, and wishing to make trial of them, he said to one: "Lord Abbot, will you lend me your needle?" When he replied: "I have not one, Sire," he asked the second, who also had none. But when the third was asked and produced his needle, the Emperor replied: "You are a true monk." You see here an example of what I just said that a needle may be a sign of virtue in a monk.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of a monk at whom when dying a demon hurled a blazing needle, because in health he had scorned to carry such a thing.

A certain Religious told me a very terrible thing of a monk of our Order, which seems suitable to set down in this place for an example. When he was in health, he refused to carry a needle according to the custom of monks, or rather he scorned to do so, but when he was lying in his last agony, a demon appeared, bearing in his hand a blazing needle of the length of a human body, and hurled it at him saying: "Because you refused in health to carry a needle, take this one now that you are about to die;" and he, relating this vision to the bystanders, terrified them all.

Novice.—If this be so I shall be careful for the future not to go without my needle.

Monk.—A monk ought not to neglect any Rule of his Order, unless compelled by necessity.

Novice.—I remember the monks you spoke of above, who offered money to obtain abbacies. Can the monks of our Order ever take part in such simony, since they possess no money?

Monk.—Yes, because simony is not only material but also mental. This makes a monk aspire to any dignity and diligently plan how he may gain it, or, what is more perilous still, succeed in obtaining it by cleverness. I will give you an example which was told me by Dom Charles the abbot of Villers, as having happened recently.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of an abbot whom a recluse accused of simony because he had obtained his election by cunning.

A certain abbot came to a recluse, whom he knew to be a saintly woman, and accustomed to receive Divine revelations, and said to her: "I beg of you, sister, to pray to God for me that He will deign to make plain to you, if it is pleasing to Him and expedient for me, that I should remain in my office as abbot." Immediately she got up, went away and prayed, and quickly returning told the abbot what had been revealed to her: "It is not," she said, "the will of God nor expedient for you that you should remain in this office, nor can you save your soul in it. Do you ask why? because you entered upon it by simony." When the abbot, bewildered at this word, said to her: "What is that you say my sister? Indeed I am not guilty of any simony in my election"; she replied: "I will prove to you that you gained your position by simony. When your predecessor died, you, in your anxiety to become abbot, did not walk before God with a simple heart, but very cleverly got round your simple brethren in the following way. 'It is not necessary,' you said, 'that we should choose anyone outside our house, which is a very honourable one, for if we did that, we should plainly accuse ourselves of incompetency.' Now you knew quite well that if the election were made from your own community, the brethren would certainly elect no one but yourself; and that was the way you became abbot." Now when he heard this, he admitted the truth of it and denied nothing; and forthwith he went to the abbot of Clairvaux and besought him to absolve him.

Novice.—If that abbot sinned so grievously by aspiring to the abbacy, why does the Apostle say: "*If a man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work* (1 Tim. iii. 1).

Monk.—The Apostle does not blame the office of a bishop, but the desire for it, because in the first he looks for toil, and in the second for ambition; and that is why he immediately

adds: "*A bishop then must be blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach etc.* (1 Tim. iii. 2). Also S. Benedict lays it down concerning an abbot in his Rule. "Although no one ought to take the honour on himself, as alas! many do to-day, but only he who is elected by God as Aaron was; nevertheless it seems to me that a man may desire dignities of this kind without danger, if there be in his mind this purpose only, that he may be of use, not that he may rule." The Saviour bears witness: *If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light* (Matt. vi. 22).

Novice.—I would gladly hear an example of this.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of Maurice, the bishop of Paris, who with a simple heart elected himself.

Monk.—When in our own times the bishopric of Paris fell vacant, the electors could not agree together, and so they handed over their votes to three arbitrators. Now when these three were unable to agree upon one man, the other two transferred their authority to Master Maurice, who was the third, so that whosoever he should nominate would become bishop. And because this Maurice, as the event showed, desired rather to be of use than to gain power, he nominated himself, saying: "I do not know either the consciences, or the proposals of others, and therefore I propose, God being my helper, to govern this bishopric blamelessly." And he did this, for he was a man of holy life, and was of great help to a vast number of souls, both by word and example, and ended his life in that bishopric. And know this, that often the ambitious have their desire taken away by the will of God, and if by His permission they are promoted, they can scarcely escape from suffering dangerous tribulations in those dignities, or else being

deposed to their utter confusion. Listen to examples of these, which perhaps may be necessary to some.

CHAPTER XX.

Of an astute prior who nominated a man who had been ejected for his infamy that his own chance might not be weakened.

A certain prior of our Order, on the death of his abbot, aspired to the abbacy himself, and when, at the time of election, he, like the other seniors, was asked by the visitor to name a suitable person, with no dove-like heart he nominated a certain monk who had been ejected from that monastery for his infamy. For he knew that as a prior his nomination would have no small weight, and if he nominated anyone from the convent, such action might weaken his own election, and so hinder the fulfilment of his desire.

It happened by the Divine will, as is believed, that the rest followed his example and nominated the same person, saying to each other: "Our prior is our eye and he would not have nominated such a person unless he had been convinced of his innocence." Probably if this prior had acted with a single mind, he would have been chosen abbot, and I am pretty sure, so far as I can gather from the words of the abbot who told me the story, that he was as much tortured by the promotion of this monk as he could have been troubled by his own rejection.

Behold how God, even in this present time, punishes those who are so clever and deceitful. There are plenty of examples of the tribulation, confusion and downfall of prelates of the church in these days, even more than in the old times. And this, perchance, is so because they were not promoted by the will of God (Hosea viii. 4).

Novice.—Since God has so great delight in the virtue of simplicity as your examples have shown, I think he must be full of wrath against that cunning which is the vice opposed to it.

Monk.—The vice opposed to simplicity is duplicity, and cunning is its companion.

Novice.—Why is it called duplicity?

Monk.—From a double fold; just as simplicity is, as it were, without any fold. For what the simple man says, that he intends and does. But the double-minded man has one thing in his heart, and another on his lips, he intends one thing and does another (James i. 8; Eccles. ii. 12; Matt. vii. 15). Such are many of those lay-brothers who compass sea and land in the dress and tonsure of religion and deceive many. Many of these even in our day have been put to death because of their wickedness; and although some of these travellers are saintly men without guile, yet even these are despised, owing to their wicked brethren. And this is why Dom Engilbert, the archbishop of Cologne, gave orders in his synod of last year, that none of them should receive any hospitality in his diocese.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of a man who deceived many at Bonn under the pretence of simplicity.

A few years ago a certain man came to Bonn with a great show of piety and pretended simplicity; and by his prayers, vigils and fastings deceived very many. Since the canons of that district thought that he was really as unworldly as he pretended to be, they entrusted to his care a hostel for the poor, and many laymen put money into his hands. After a short time that deceiver began to depart from his pretended asceticism, to drink wine, to eat flesh, to pray less and to sleep

longer. When this was pointed out to him, he replied: "I undertook these observances for a time by the advice of a priest." Why should I say more? He finally disappeared secretly, carrying off the money entrusted to him and showed by his acts how ruinous is the vice of duplicity. When he heard this, Dean Christian said as follows: "Truly my brethren, I will never give my soul for the soul of anyone." There are many kinds of deception by this sort of rascal which I might tell you as having taken place in our own day, but they are not edifying. Would you like now to hear the sort of punishment that God often inflicts in this present life upon the vice of duplicity and cunning?

Novice.—Indeed I very much desire it.

Monk.—Listen then.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of a man who dealt treacherously with his mother and was punished in the neck by a serpent.

There was a young man, a layman, born on the banks of the Moselle, named Henry, if I remember rightly, who deceived his simple mother in the following way, with words which were indeed honeyed, but with an intention which was poisonous. "Mother," he said, "I beg that you will solemnly renounce all your property, to wit, all your fiefs and freeholds and allow me to take them over, so that by the aid of these riches I may be able to marry a more honourable wife. Everything I possess is yours, and I will provide for you most honourably."

His mother, who did not perceive the guile of the serpent in her son, consented to his request and resigned all the income of her possessions (Ecclus. xxxiii. 21). To make a long story short, the wife was brought home and the mother was driven out. And when she fell into want and daily complained to

him, he shut his ears that he might not hear his mother's laments.

One day when sitting at table with his wife, he heard the voice of his mother as she knocked at the door, and said: "Listen, the devil is once more making a disturbance here," and he said to the servant: "Go and put this chicken in the sideboard until she goes away"; and when this was done and she was admitted, after begging her son to have pity on her, she was driven out with a great storm of words. Then he said to the servant: "Now you can bring back our chicken." But the servant, when he opened the chest, saw not a chicken but a coiled up serpent on the dish; so he came back terrified and told his master what he had seen. Whereupon he sent a maid-servant and she said that she had seen exactly the same thing. He, thinking that they were mocking him, said angrily: "Even if it be the devil himself I'll fetch him out"; and getting up from the table he bent over the sideboard to take up the dish, and immediately the serpent leapt upon his neck, and that he might properly punish the vice of duplicity made a double coil of himself round the man's throat. And so when he sat down to eat, the serpent shared his food, and as often as food was taken away from him, or any instrument brought by which he might be detached, he so tightened his hold on his victim's neck, that his face swelled and his eyes started out of his head.

Novice.—Rightly does he seem to me to have been punished by means of a serpent, because as the devil deceived Eve by a serpent, so by the same means did he deceive his simple mother.

Monk.—You judge rightly. It is now thirteen years, more or less, since these things happened. For this same Henry was carried in a carriage through our province to various shrines of saints, and many people saw him. And his mother, having compassion on his pains, followed him with maternal affection. About the same time the vice of duplicity and cunning, being duly found out, was terribly punished by Philip, king of France, of whom we spoke above.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of a provoſt of Paris whom King Philip ordered to be buried alive because he had guilefully ſtolen a vineyard from a dead man.

This same king had a provoſt in the city of Paris who coveted a vineyard belonging to a fellow citizen, and very importunately inſiſted that he should sell it to him. When the citizen replied in the words which Naboth is said to have used to Ahab, King of Israel (1 Kings xxi. 3), thereupon the provoſt turned to threats, but to no purpose.

It happened that meanwhile the man died. When the provoſt learnt this, he was delighted, and like a man who is overcunning, he planned a device as follows to his own deſtruction. He bribed two of the sheriff's officers to bear false witness for him ; and went with them, according to agreement, one rough night to the grave of the dead man, and after throwing out the earth, he went down into the grave, and placing in the hand of the dead man the sum which he had offered him for the vine during his life, said : " You, gentlemen, are witnesses that I have paid this man so much money for his vineyard, which he himself has taken into his hand as you see, and has made no objection." When they said that they were witnesses, he immediately took back the money and replaced the earth. In the morning, bringing up these men as witnesses, he claimed the vineyard.

Now when the widow of the dead man heard this, she came to the court in ſtupefaction and contradicted the provoſt, saying that neither her husband nor herself had ever sold him that vineyard, nor had they ever received any money for it. To which he replied : " I bought the vineyard for so much and I placed the money in the hands of your husband, as these men will testify, nor did he make any objection." When she found that she could profit nothing she ran off to the king and complained to him of the violence of that provoſt. When he contradicted her, supported by the teſtimony of the aforesaid men, the king, because he had no time to hear the case himself, entruſted it to certain others.

Now, they, deceived by the witness of the sheriff's officers, favoured the side of the provoſt, and passed sentence for him againſt the widow. Then she being at her wit's end, came to the king again with great importunity and clamorous weeping, whereupon the king ordered the witnesses to be called, and as a prudent man, he examined them prudently, sending for one of them by himself, and speaking with him privately, said: "Do you know the Lord's Prayer?" When the other replied: "Yes, I know it, sire"; the king went on: "Say it to me then." And when the man had done this, he said nothing further to him but ordered him to wait in a neighbouring room; then calling the other, he spoke to him very severely, saying: "Your companion has told me the simple truth about the vineyard; he has spoken as truly as the Paternoſter, than which nothing is more true. Moreover, if you disagree in any way with him, you will be punished." He, thinking that his fellow had told everything to the king, caſt himself at his feet in fear and trembling, saying: "Have pity on us, sire, because we have done thus and thus, being persuaded by your provoſt." The king was greatly angered, reſtored the vineyard to the widow and ordered the provoſt to be buried alive.

Novice.—It was juſtly done that he should be pitilessly buried alive, who had inhumanly dug up the dead man.

Monk.—The punishment of sin comes from God, and it very often happens that the method of the punishment is shaped in accordance with the crime. I will give you another inſtance of this.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of a thief who was delivered from the gallows and was ſtraightway hanged again because he unjuſtly attacked his deliverer.

A certain canon of S. Andrew in Cologne, as was told me by Maſter Rener his fellow canon, was accuſtomed to send

his servant each year to collect the tithes of his church. Now as this servant passed a certain gallows and saw a man who had been recently hanged thereon still quivering with life, he was moved with pity, cut the noose with a sword and brought water and restored him to life.

As soon as the man recovered his strength he returned evil for good, followed his deliverer to the nearest town, put his hand on his horse's bridle and cried out that this man had robbed him by violence. Immediately a number of men ran up from all sides full of anger for the robbery, and without listening to the youth, carried him off to the same gallows from which the thief had been taken down.

The men of the other town who had collected together for the hanging of the original thief, had not yet all gone back, but when they saw a gathering at the gallows, which was shared between the two villages, they came back by the will of God to enquire the cause ; and God opened the mouth of the condemned man : " I," said he, " delivered this man from this gallows, and see the sort of wicked reward he gives to me." And when they had considered and discovered the whole case, they hanged the man the second time and delivered the innocent blood.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of a false pilgrim who was hanged by the just judgment of God, after trying to palm off his crime of theft upon a true pilgrim.

Not long ago when certain pilgrims from Germany were on their way to the Church of S. James of Compostella, one night a false brother joined them. In the morning when they went out of the inn, he followed them as far as the gate of the city and there laid hands on one of them, crying out

that he had ſtolen his horse. The judge ordered them all to return to the inn ; and when they all bore witness that he whom this rascal accused was a simple and upright man, the judge in his wisdom ordered the saddles and bridles to be taken from all the horses in the absence of the accuser and that all of them should be put in the ſtable.

When this was done he sent for the accuser and said : " Go in and bring out your horse." The man went in and brought out a horse which was not, however, the same which, at the gate of the city, he had claimed as having been ſtolen from him ; for not even then had he taken sufficient notice of him. Then amid the laughter of all and of him whose horse had been brought out, they made their explanations to the judge, and that wicked man was hanged upon the gallows. You see now how God protects those who walk in simplicity and how He punishes the cunning of the wicked.

Novice.—I remember that you said above that punishment for the sin comes from God.

Monk.—That all punishment comes from God, the prophet Amos is witness (Amos iii. 6 ; also Isaiah xlv. 7). By evil he means punishment and tribulation, things which seem evil to those who suffer them, though in themselves they are good because they are the creation of God. Moreover I will give you an illuſtration to show you how the punishment of sin comes from God.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of Bertolph, Palatine of Wittillinbach, who received a command from on high to hang the firſt man he should meet.

Bertolph, the palatine of Wittillinbach was a very severe judge and used to hang a thief even for the loss of a single

penny. And as I heard from a certain abbot, whenever he rode out, he hung a noose to his saddle bow that there might be no delay in the punishment of the guilty.

One day when he got up early and was fastening the noose to the saddle in his usual way, he heard a voice in the sky like this: "Bertolph, whosoever shall first meet you when you go out of the castle, hang that man with your noose." Now he accepted this voice as a prophecy, and as soon as he came out the first man who met him was his own bailiff. When he saw him, he was greatly grieved, because he loved the man, and said to him: "I am very sorry to have met you." "Why?" "Because you will hang"; and the other: "Why shall I hang?" And when the palatine replied: "I do not know, but prepare yourself by confession and set your affairs in order, because I cannot oppose the Divine voice"; the other seeing that it could not be otherwise, said: "The Lord is just. I have pursued and killed many who went into my house; I have plundered many of many things; I have not been faithful to you my master, nor have I spared the poor." And all who heard his confession, wondered, and by his death they understood that the punishment of sin comes from God.

And because this same palatine passed judgment without pity, when he himself was slain by Henry the marshall to avenge King Philip whom he had killed, he neither asked nor received any pity. It is not just judgment nor is it ordained by God that small and great faults should receive the same penalty.

Novice.—I am now quite clear from what you have told me, that God punishes sin in accordance with the method and degree of the guilt.

Monk.—I will make this more clear to you in the following chapters which will show how in our own times it has been most clearly His will to punish the vice of duplicity.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of Theodoric of Erinportze, who was carried dead through the same street on the anniversary of the day on which King Philip had been introduced into Cologne by his means.

At the time of the struggle between Philip and Otto, kings of the Romans, the people of Cologne clung faithfully to the side of Otto, partly in obedience to the Apostolic see, and partly because of the oath they had given to Otto, and though they submitted to many expenses, losses and dangers, yet some of them, as it was said, had been secretly bribed by the partisans of Philip ; and the most powerful among these seemed to be Theodoric of Erinportze. By his craft it was brought about that Otto was forsaken, and Philip received into the city. Indeed, while he gave the former lip-service, his heart was with the latter.

One day, when Philip was courting the great men of the city, who were gathered round him, this same Theodoric led him to where the ladies were, and looking round, said: " Look, ladies, here is my king whom I have always desired." Wonderful dispensation! On the very day when the year was completed he was carried on his bier through the same street. And when he was about to be buried in the convent of nuns called Piscina, the interment was forbidden by letters of the priors, whom he had often greatly troubled.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of Henry Ratio, whose prebend was taken and held by one who was thrust in his place by Cardinal Peter according to Henry's own advice.

A few years before this, when Peter, cardinal of Saxony was at Cologne, Henry surnamed Ratio, a canon of the church of

S. Mary ad Gradus, and an advocate very skilled in all trials, had induced the same cardinal to inſtruct the canons of his church that they should choose as brother and fellow-canon the son of a certain citizen, although there was no canonry vacant. Now this had seemed to them too absurd, and they refused and were consequently suspended from all services. Judging that suspension to be merely frivolous, they unanimously elected a provoſt. But Henry, that he might throw them into the greater confusion, was the only one to choose a different provoſt, by whose help and on whose behalf he greatly troubled the peace of his brethren by law suits and losses. By the juſt judgment of God he was the firſt to die in that same year, and was buried with his mouth wide open. The young man, who had been thruſt in by his advice, received and held Henry's prebend. I have been credibly informed that the mouth of the dead man could not be closed by any means, so that it might be plain to all how great was his sin of selling his tongue in the law courts.

Novice.—I beg that for the present you will lay aside ſtories of the vice of duplicity and will return to your discourse on simplicity, which can prevail even againſt learned tongues before the tribunal as you said before.

Monk.—The ſtory in the following chapter will illuſtrate this more fully.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of a half-witted prieſt, who by the simplicity of his words before Pope Innocent obtained his church.

The lord pope Innocent, who was a moſt learned man and a very skilful speaker, according to the account given me by our fellow monk, Cæsarius, who was at one time abbot of Prüm, and who was present at the time of this ſtory, was so

touched by the simple discourse of a certain priest that the preferment, which he deserved to have lost for his illiteracy, he actually obtained by means of it.

It appears that a certain clerk had taken away his church by some means or other, and being summoned by him, appeared before the said Innocent and pleaded his cause in elaborate language, and with weighty sentiments ; but that simple priest interrupted his discourse and said: "Holy father, the man is not speaking the truth, he had done me great wrong." The lord pope, looking earnestly upon that most simple man, replied: "Tell me your own case in your own words," and he: "I do not know how to speak Latin." "Speak," said the Pope, "as best you can, I shall understand you well enough." Then he very timidly and very clumsily used words something like these: "Holy father, that clerk has a number of churches and I had only one, and he has taken this one from me, and now has one more with all the rest. This is why I complain to you." The Pope had compassion on him and said to his adversary: "What reply do you make to this my brother? Your avarice did not allow you to be content wth several churches, but you must also take away his only one from this poor priest. He is of so simple a nature, that if his cause had been unjust, he would never have come to the Roman Curia. It is the justice of his cause which has given him confidence; I order you never again to disturb him in his church, and further, I will relieve you of your other churches." When he heard this he was silent in terror, because he saw that simplicity was fighting for his adversary.

Novice.—Seeing that the words and works of the simple find so much favour with princes in the world, I think that God must greatly delight in their speech.

Monk.—You see this from Paul the simple, but I will also show it you by more recent examples.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of the simple prayer of a lay-brother who threatened Christ that he would complain of Him to His mother if He did not deliver him from temptation.

A certain simple lay-brother in Hemmenrode was very grievously tempted ; and once, as he stood in prayer, he used the following words : " Indeed, Lord, if Thou dost not deliver me from this temptation, I will complain of Thee to Thy mother." The merciful Lord who is the master of humility, and the lover of simplicity, forestalled the complaint of the lay-brother, as if He feared to be accused to His mother, and immediately made his temptation easier. There was another lay-brother standing behind him at the time, and when he heard this prayer, he smiled and told it to others to edify them.

Novice.—Who would not be edified by such marvellous humility of the Saviour.

Monk.—I will tell you others prayers of the simple-hearted, at which you will rejoice still more.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of a recluse who sought for Christ in a hole and found Him.

Master John, who is now abbot of S. Trudon, when he was once visiting in Saxony a recluse who was well known to him and found her weeping, said to her : " What is the matter, sister? Why are you weeping? " And when she replied : " Because I have lost my Lord," remarking the fervour of her devotion, the abbot, knowing her to be a holy woman, went on playfully : " Search round the corners of your cell and say : ' Lord, where art Thou, answer me '; and perhaps you will find Him in some hole in the wall." She, understanding

these simple words quite literally, after his departure, went round the walls of her cell, calling upon the Beloved as she had been told, and found at last Him whom she sought, and rejoiced in the recovered possession of what she had lost. Often does God withdraw His grace that it may be sought the more earnestly and guarded the more diligently when found.

A few years afterwards when this same John went again to visit her and asked how she fared, she replied in high spirits: "I could not be better. And I give you hearty thanks because I found my Lord exactly as you taught me." And when he did not understand what she said, she smiled and reminded him of what we have told above, and he gave glory to Christ who humours the simple-minded.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of a simple sister in Kummede, to whom, while praying, Christ made answer that He was in the sack.

In Kummede, a convent of nuns of our Order, there was a certain simple maiden who possessed a wooden crucifix. This she used frequently to adore and kiss, and then to put it away in a sack and hide it under her mattress. One day she forgot where she had put it and she wandered sadly round every corner of the monastery seeking it, but could not find it. Later, when she was lying prostrate before a certain altar, and praying for the restoration of this image, and beseeching the Saviour with many tears, the Son of God, pleased with the maiden's longing, replied: "Do not weep my daughter, because I am lying in the sack beneath your mattress."

I thought that it had been told me by the prior of that house, that she had heard the voice in a dream, as I remember to have set down in the moral homilies of the Infancy of the Saviour, but, later, I understood that it undoubtedly happened

as I have told it. Rising straight way from her knees, she rolled back her mattress, and found it exactly as she had heard. See how this is what I said above, that sometimes the Lord withdraws His Grace that it may be more eagerly sought, and that it may be the more deserved by such seeking.

Novice.—Since God takes so great delight in the prayers of the simple-minded, surely their death must be very precious in His sight.

Monk.—Precious indeed, because the virtue of simplicity outshines the palm of martyrdom and the glory of miracles. I will give you three examples of this.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the death of the simple-minded Marcadellus.

In Ferrara, a city of Lombardy, a few years ago, there was a man named Marcadellus of wonderful simplicity and of the greatest devotion towards the shrines of the saints. Indeed, on account of his special simplicity, he was considered by many to be weak-minded, though in the sight of God most prudent. For whatever he could save from his toil beyond the actual necessities of life, that he scrupulously expended in visiting the church of S. James or of the Blessed Apostles S.S. Peter and Paul. So long as he could, he fed quantities of the poor and when on account of old age he was no longer able to do this, he provided food for them from the alms of the faithful by begging from door to door. He never left the church while any service was going on and thus became beloved by all.

Now he lived a long while in a certain village of the said diocese and noticed in the church of that town a silver censer hanging rather precariously, and being frightened both on behalf of the church and also by his own conscience he said to the priest: "That censer is not hanging very safely."

When the other said it had hung like that for many years without any danger ; Marcadellus replied : " A thing may often happen in one day which has not occurred for a thousand years." To make a long ſtory short, by the inſtigation of the devil the censer was ſtolen ; but nobody imputed the theft to Marcadellus. But when the thief, since the Lord prevented him and was preparing for his servant an opportunity of martyrdom, could not and dared not sell the censer, knowing Marcadellus to be a very simple-minded man and a great frequenter of that church he went to him secretly, and after making him swear not to betray him, confessed that he himself had ſtolen the vessel. Marcadellus replied : " Give me the censer and I will easily reſtore it without any one knowing, and if it should be necessary I will even give my life for yours. When he heard this the thief handed over to him the censer, which he had wrapped up in hay and put into a sack.

Then the other frequented the aforesaid church more than ever that he might be able to put back the censer into its place cautiously and without anybody noticing ; but one day, when the doors of the church were closed, he was driven away by the extreme violence of a ſtorm and was compelled to seek the shelter of a neighbouring house, and forgot his sack. A certain man who was passing by, picked it up, and knowing whose it was, handed it over to his wife to keep, that she might give it back to Marcadellus when he asked for it. But she feeling the weight of the sack, answered her husband : " Bread cannot be so heavy as this " ; I think that in his great simplicity he muſt have filled it up with ſtones. And when she opened the sack and found the censer in it, and raised a great cry, showing her neighbours what she had found, a crowd of people collected.

Laſt of all Marcadellus himself came up ; and when he was asked to whom the sack belonged he refused to lie and answered : " The sack is mine, but what is in it is yours. I did not ſteal the censer, but yet I will not betray the thief." Then he told them the whole ſtory, how the thief had come to him and what promise he had made. Then they said : " It is a law of Lombardy that you muſt either produce the thief

or undergo his penalty ; " to which he replied : " I am in your hands, do with me what is just." They, wishing to consider their own interests, took this man to Ferrara, brought him before the judge, laid the case before him, and bore good testimony to his innocence and simplicity. But when the judge could not induce him to disclose the name of the thief, he passed upon him the sentence of death, and ordered him to be beheaded before the doors of the cathedral, as one guilty of sacrilege ; and certain men buried his body in that same place.

Next night when some pious matrons of the city were going to matins at the cathedral and came to his tomb, they heard there angelic songs and saw wax candles burning, and perceived the odour of a very sweet smell on all sides of it. Now when they found this still more plainly on the second and third nights, they told the bishop of that city all their experience. And since he was a spiritually-minded man, he took with him others and having found on the fourth night that what the women had said was true, he caused a church to be built over the tomb of the man of God, and even to this day miracles still take place there to the glory of the name of Christ.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the death of Margaret, a virgin of Louvain.

About the same time, a certain citizen of Louvain, with his wife, set their affairs in order and arranged to go to our monastery of Villers ; for they were both of them devoutly minded, and devoted supporters of the Religious life. Now they had with them a grown up maiden, a relation of theirs, who very simply and diligently served as a hand-maiden, both them and their guests, as is witnessed by our lay-brother, and the name of this maiden was Margaret.

Certain wicked men, had found out that they had saved money, and on the very night before they were to go, about eight of them came to their inn late at night as if wishing to lodge there, and sent the aforesaid maiden for wine. While she was gone, they killed the master and mistress and the whole household whom they found, and when they were all thus murdered, they took away with them the girl, who had now returned with the wine, and went, all of them, to a certain house a long way from the city.

Now while she was sitting sadly there, and the owners of of the house already guessed that she had been carried off by force, they took her down to the river. But some of the robbers had compassion upon her and one of them said: "Let her live and I will marry her"; but they refused because they were afraid she might betray them. Then they added ten marks to the share of one of them to induce him to kill her, and he, taking the simple lamb like a cruel butcher, having first cut her throat, thrust his knife into her side, and so threw her still alive into the river, as a sacrifice to God.

But a woman who was a guest in the house which they had entered, followed them secretly when they went out, and saw what was done. And in the morning when this horrible crime became known, the whole city was moved, and the wretches were hunted for, but could not be found. After examining the bodies of those who had been murdered at the inn, enquiries were made about the girl. Her body was found a few days later by some fishermen, who did not dare to give information, fearing that the crime might be laid to their charge, and so they buried her on the bank.

Afterwards, several people saw lights around her tomb during the night. Wherefore they dug up the body and carried it thence to Louvain, where they built a chapel over it. And even to this day various miracles are wrought, so great were her merits, both in the place where she was killed, and also in the chapel to which her body was translated.

Her master, Amandus by name, together with his wife, appeared after death to a certain monk of Villers, and when he was asked about his condition, he replied: "We have not yet attained to full glory." When finally he was asked about

the maid, he said: "Whatever grace is given to us, we owe to the merits of Margaret, nor do we dare to look forward to the glory which she already enjoys." Do you see now how greatly simplicity and innocence of life contribute to the glory of martyrdom? All indeed were slain but all were not distinguished by miracles. From which it is clear that it is not the suffering that makes the martyr but the cause.

Novice.—What cause of martyrdom would you say, there was in the case of this maiden?

Monk.—As I have already said, simplicity and an innocent life. There are different kinds of martyrdom, to wit, innocence as in Abel, uprightness as in the Prophets and John the Baptist; love of the law as in the Maccabees; confession of faith as in the Apostles. For all these different causes the Lamb, i.e. Christ, is said to have been *slain from the foundation of the world* (Apoc. xiii. 8).

Novice.—Some have even put themselves to death from an excess of simplicity.

Monk.—Such have no share in the glory of martyrdom, unless they are excused by some impelling cause. Here is an example.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of the simple-minded concubine of a priest who threw herself into a furnace.

A certain priest, as was told me by a monk, was preaching one day before a large congregation on sin and the pains of hell, and a woman present being terrified and stricken to the heart, interrupted him crying: "O Sir what will become of the concubines of priests." He, knowing the woman to be of a very simple nature, replied playfully: "They can never be saved unless they pass through a burning furnace."

Now this woman was herself the concubine of a certain

priest ; and she, taking the words of the preacher, not in jest, but in all seriousness, happened one day to be in the house alone when the oven was heated for baking the bread. She closed and fastened the outer door and in the hope of escaping eternal fire, hurled herself into the flaming furnace and in the midst of the flames breathed out her soul. At this hour, there were some standing near the house, who saw a snow-white dove come forth from the chimney of the furnace and pass away into the sky in a flood of light. Astonished by this sight, they broke open the doors, entered and drew out the woman, lifeless and half consumed, and at the bidding of the preacher, buried her in the open field as a suicide. But God, that He might make clear that the death so simply encountered was the result, not of wickedness, but of obedience, lit up her tomb every night by burning candles, as was seen by many.

Novice.—This story does not scandalise me, because I have read in *Vitaspatrum* of a certain abbot, who ordered one who wished to take the vows, to enter a burning furnace ; and when he obeyed, it was counted to him for righteousness. But I should like to know what was meant by the dove that came out of the furnace.

Monk.—It was the soul of the simple-hearted woman. For it was under the same form that S. Benedict, as we read in his life, saw the soul of his sister Scholastica enter the heavens.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the death of Ludwig, a simple monk.

This dove calls to my mind a certain simple monk named Ludwig who died among us two years ago. He fell into his agony about noon when the whole convent was taking its midday sleep, but a certain monk, in his dreams, saw a white

dove sitting on the roof of the cell in which Ludwig lay dying. He saw also a black cat ſtalking this dove ; and when this animal became too importunate, the dove, fearing to be caught by it, flew away to the church and settled upon the cross, and there reſted in safety. At the same time another monk had a vision that the brethren were ſtanding on this side and that in a circle and that a lion was prowling round and trying to break through and enter into their midſt ; but he was warded off by each one of them and being driven away by their kicks was ultimately put to flight.

Meanwhile the gong sounded and the whole convent assembled and ſtood round the dying man repeating the litany ; and soon the prieſt died and when he had been washed and robed, he was carried with solemn chanting to the church ; and I truſt that he escaped the wiles both of the cat and of the lion. The devil is likened, on account of his rapacity, both to a cat and to a lion which indeed are very like each other both in appearance and in nature, especially in the way they lie in wait for the passing souls of the simple. How mightily he is driven away in that terrible hour by the prayers of the upright, you will hear abundantly in the XIth book about the dying. This same Ludwig, although he was simple by nature, had nevertheless lived a very carnal life before his conversion, even to old age. But how pleasing the virtue of simplicity is to God, with whom there is no shadow of turning, the precious death of a certain nun will make plain to you.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of the death of a simple nun who imagined a goat to be a woman of the world.

In the diocese of Trèves there is a convent of nuns called Ludzerath. In this convent, according to an ancient cuſtom,

no girl is admitted at a higher age than seven years. This rule or cuſtom grew up in the desire to preserve simplicity, which makes the whole body full of light.

Now there was quite lately, in this convent, a certain adult virgin who was so child-like in all worldly affairs, that she was scarcely able to diſtinguish between lay folk and cattle, because before her conversion, she had no knowledge of the appearance of either. One day a goat climbed up on to the wall of the orchard and when she saw it, being altogether ignorant of what it was, she said to a ſiſter who was ſtanding beside her: "What is that?" the other, knowing her simplicity, answered the wondering child in jeſt: "That is a woman of the world;" and added: "When women of the world grow old, they develop both horns and beards." The maiden, thinking that it really was so, was pleased to have learnt something and often by examples of such simplicity, she lightened the seriousness of her ſiſters.

One day she fell grievously sick, and while she was lying ill so that she could scarcely speak, the nurse came to visit her, but she asked her firſt by word and then by a sign to go away at once, but the nurse, underſtanding neither word nor sign, and ſtanding there ſtolidly, the sick girl folded up the veil and threw it gently againſt her breaſt, as she ſtood there and immediately she fell to the ground as though she had been ſtruck by a ſtone. After she had lain there for some time insensible, she recovered and got up and looked through the window next the bed of the sick nun; and lo in the cemetery there were ſtanding a multitude of horses with gilded saddles and golden bridles. At this moment, the aforesaid maiden fell into her agony, and when the ſiſters came to her, she began to cry with a loud voice: "Make room, make room, make way for these lords to pass." For she had seen her cell filled with persons of wonderful beauty and glory whose robes showed all of gold; and so she fell asleep in the Lord.

Novice.—I think that this muſt have been the celeſtial army who came to conduct the soul of that simple woman to its heavenly home.

Monk.—You judge rightly; but there is one thing I

should like you to notice, namely that while she was sick, she saw the horses in the cemetery, but, at her death, she saw the angels come into her room. Henry the prior of the Preachers in Cologne is the witness of this vision, and he related that he had heard it from the provost of the aforesaid nunnery.

BOOK VII

PROLOGUE.

Six divisions are now finished, namely those of Conversion, Contrition, Confession, Temptation, Demons and Singleness of heart ; and of the six that remain the first place is taken by the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, because she is the most worthy member of the church. And it is not unfitting this should fall into the seventh place, because seven is the number of virginity, since no number below the number of ten can be generated from it. The fact that a virgin gave birth to a son was a fact above nature. She is the rod that springs from the root of Jesse, who put forth for us that flower, on which doth rest the sevenfold Spirit of grace. Whose help I humbly implore that I may be able to write worthily and complete my task.

CHAPTER I.

Of the mystic names of the B.V.M. and of the benefits she bestows upon the human race.

S. John, in the Apocalypse saw *a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet and a crown of twelve stars upon her head* (Apoc. xii. 1).

This woman is the Virgin Mary, brighter than the sun in the splendour of charity ; the moon, that is the world,

is beneath her feet to show her contempt for earthly glory ; she is crowned with all the virtues as with a diadem gemmed with stars ; and, a higher dignity than all these, she is pregnant with the Divine offspring. Some of the names by which she is called are : hill, castle, courtyard, temple, chamber, city, palm, cedar, vine, rose, and a great wealth of noble names besides. Splendid are her names of : the rod that budded the burning bush, the fleece of Gideon, Solomon's throne of ivory and gold, the sealed fountain, the inclosed garden, and very many others which I must omit for the sake of brevity.

For as in all creation there is nothing holier, nothing more worthy or more excellent than the Mother of the Creator, so there is no vision of the saints more worshipful, more delightful, more exalted than the vision of Her :

" Whose prayers," as has been said, " overcome vice, whose name dispels sadness, whose odour is more fragrant than lilies, and whose lips surpass the honey-comb in sweetness. She is more full of savour than the nut, whiter than the snow, more dewy than the rose, brighter than the moon, with the light of the true Sun."

Novice.—Happy in truth, and thrice happy, are they who have been counted worthy to rejoice in the vision of her, and to be delighted with the sound of her voice, to be consoled with her prayers and to be strengthened with her blessing.

Monk.—This you shall learn more fully by examples. Already you have heard some of the metaphors and figures under which she is represented ; would you like now to learn of what sort and how great are the benefits that the world receives through her?

Novice.—There is nothing I more thirst for.

Monk.—She is the preserver of the round world, the consoler of the sad, the faithful defender of her servants. By her sinners are enlightened, the despairing brought to confession, the apostate from God miraculously reconciled, the righteous comforted with revelations. *Her name and remembrance* (Ps. xxvi. 8.) heal the sick, put demons to flight, loosen chains, drive away fear, restrain temptations, by her the timid are made brave, the sluggards are roused, the exiles

mercifully recalled. She loves those who love her, nay, she anticipates and honours them in love ; and because she is just, she punishes and brings low those who despise her. With her are all strengthening balsams, all health-bringing ungents. *Her memorial is sweeter than honey and her inheritance above honey and the honey-comb* (Ecclus. xxiv. 27). She is present with the dying and she guides the souls of the dead to eternal life.

Novice.—Athough I believe all this about her yet I would like you to make it still clearer by examples.

Monk.—I will tell you what I have heard from the Religious, assisted, I hope, by her prayers. And first I will give you two examples of how the world is preserved by her merits and prayers.

CHAPTER II.

Of her image which sweated for fear of the Divine judgment.

It is some years since that great storm of which I spoke in the 21st chapter of the 4th book and during it, while the people in a certain church in this province were worshipping, and the priest was celebrating the divine mysteries, the image of the Mother of God began to sweat so violently, that the bystanders wondered greatly and some matrons there wiped off the drops with their veils, how, by God's good pleasure, there was present there at that time one possessed with the devil. When asked for the cause, he replied : " Why do you stand astonished? The Son of Mary had stretched forth His hand to strike and if she herself had not restrained Him, the world would no longer exist. This is the cause of that sweat." And all were terrified who heard such fearful words. These things were told me by a pious abbot of our Order as having at that time recently happened.

CHAPTER III.

Of the plague of Friesland, on account of the insult to the Body of the Lord.

Shortly after these events, to wit, in the year of grace 1218, the sea overrunning its boundaries in the country of Friesland, covered many provinces, destroyed towns, overthrew churches though built of stone and drowned more than 100,000 people. So high were the waves, that they were seen to cover the tops of towers, and storm following storm, a universal flood seemed to be threatened. And it was told our abbot who had gone that year into Friesland to make visitations, the raging waters would have spread even as far as Cologne, if He, who aroused them, had not restrained them at the prayer of His Mother, as will afterwards be told.

Novice.—Do you know the cause of so great a blow?

Monk.—Yes. There was a certain Frisian pugilist in that province who often came home drunk, and as often, belaboured his wife with stripes and blows. Once she pretended illness through fear of her husband and that the pretence might seem more real, she asked that the Body of the Lord might be given her. As the priest was coming, the pugilist carrying a cup of beer and in a drunken condition met him and urged him to drink. And when he replied: "I am carrying the Body of the Lord, I will not drink now;" the Frisian in anger struck the pyx with the cup and shook out of it all the sacred wafers, so that they were scattered over the floor. And the matrons, who had come to comfort the woman, saw as it were stars shining over each particle of the Host, and the priest with weeping and mourning gathered them again into the pyx and went away.

The Frisian indeed was summoned before the dean of the province and excommunicated, but little he cared. Finally he was compelled to this, that, branded with the cross for so great a sacrilege, he should go to Rome with the aforesaid priest also marked with the cross. Honorius, who was then the lord pope, and to whom he confessed his sin, enjoined

upon him as a penance, that he should cross the sea and there serve Christ in arms for three years. What need of more? Both crossed the sea and both perished before Damietta. After their death, the Lord in that same year smote the province terribly and the cause of the stroke was hidden from the people.

Now there was a certain holy matron who served the Lord continually with fastings, prayers, vigils and alms, and she was the aunt of Witbold the lord abbot of S. Bernard; to her appeared the Blessed Mother of God, moved by her tears, and full of compassion for the people and thus spoke: "Because of the insult shown to my Son in the sacrament of His Body, Friesland is submerged and it will be still further afflicted, if condign punishment be not meted out." From these words she gathered that not only the sacrilege of the pugilist, but also the crying sins of the whole people were the cause of the punishment. Presently, the Mother of compassion added: "Lift up thine eyes towards the sea;" and when she had done this, she saw, floating upon the waves the pyx that had been struck by the pugilist. And when it drew near enough to be seen plainly she said: "Behold the Body of my Son. On the spot where it was scattered abroad, a church must be built and the same reverence must be shown to that place as is shown to the Holy Sepulchre. Know this also, that both priest and pugilist are dead; the latter, because he died unrepentant, is buried in hell, but the priest is now in purgatory." Now Theodoric, the prior of Jesse, told us that the pugilist when he set out for the Holy Land had shown abundant signs of contrition, but we are compelled to believe the words of the Blessed Mother of God.

When this vision was made known, Theodoric, the lord bishop of Münster, in whose diocese the chief part of Friesland lies, sent letters by Ydidas, the cellarer of S. Bernard, who himself told me of it, and enjoined a solemn penance on all who dwelt in that province. That this was insufficient is shown by the fact that in the following year, Friesland was again punished and many thousands drowned in new floods. A certain rich matron belonging to the family of the pugilist built the church. From what I have said you

can understand how solicitous is the B.V.M. for the salvation of men, when she shows so much anxiety for their repentance. How she comforts the afflicted will be made clear by the following story.

CHAPTER IV.

Of a feeble-minded priest, who was degraded by S. Thomas of Canterbury, and recovered his office by the intervention of the Blessed Mary.

An abbot of our Order told me a pleasant story of S. Thomas of Canterbury, martyred in our own times, which does not appear in his passion, nor is it found in the book of his miracles. There was in his diocese a certain half-witted priest, who knew no mass except that of Our Lady, which he said every day; and when he was formally charged with this, the blessed bishop felt bound for the honour of the sacrament, to prohibit him from saying mass at all from that time forward.

Therefore he fell into sorrow and want, and called continually upon the Blessed Virgin, who appeared to him and said: "Go to the bishop and tell him from me to restore you to your office." The priest replied: "Lady, I am poor and of no reputation; he will not listen to me, indeed I shall never be able to come into his presence." The Blessed Virgin added: "Go, for I will prepare the way for you." And he: "But Lady, he will not believe what I say." And she replied: "You will tell him for a sign that when at such a time and in such a place, he was repairing his hair-shirt which had come unsewn, I held one side of it and helped him and immediately he will believe you."

In the morning, the priest found audience of the bishop without difficulty and gave him the message of the Blessed Mother of God; and when he said to him: "How shall I

know that she has sent you? " he repeated to him the incident of the hair-shirt. And when he heard this, the blessed archbishop was stricken with fear and amazement and replied: " See, I restore to you your office and I enjoin upon you to sing and repeat the mass of Our Lady only and to pray for me.

Novice.—Wonderful indeed is the compassion of our Lady that she should so defend a feeble-minded priest who was worthy of deposition and should judge him worthy to remain in so important an office.

Monk.—All this arises from her ineffable pity, as you will see still more astonishingly in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

Also of a priest in Dern, deposed because he was half-witted, to whom S. Mary ordered his church to be restored.

A certain canon of S. Gereon in Cologne, Hardarad by name, of noble birth, born in Merenberg, was rector of a certain church called Dern, upon the river Lahn. Since he was a man of extravagant and expensive tastes and found his yearly income too small, understanding that the vicar of his church at Dern had much money, he set about planning how he might get some from him. And knowing him to be quite illiterate, he took with him the dean of Limburg and entered the church as if to hear mass within the octave of the Epiphany when the office is a particularly difficult one, even when the priest has prepared himself for it. The priest was terrified when he saw such important personages come in ; and after the confession, as he did not know the office for the day, he began the introit from that of our Lady, which begins: *" Vultum tuum deprecabuntur ;"* and Hardarad, not unwilling to confuse him, and using his

authority as rector, began the office of the day, i.e.: *"In excelso throno."* And when the priest went on with what he had begun, the other stopped, pretending to be thrown into confusion. When the mass was over, he spoke harshly to the priest and said: "Sir, what mass was it that you said to day?" And the other replied: "That of our Lady; was there anything wrong with it?" Hardarad replied: "Take care that you never say any mass again in a church of mine," and so went away after putting in another priest. Now he who was thus turned out, fell into poverty and want, and the Mother of Pity took compassion on him; one night, when Hardarad had said matins, she appeared to him when alone in the church at S. Gereon and spoke to him severely, saying: "Why did you, driven by your avarice, send away my chaplain? If you do not at once restore him, I will take from you the use of your tongue." He threw himself at her feet, besought pardon and promised full satisfaction. Next morning he sent a messenger to restore the priest who had been deprived, charging him, as was said above about S. Thomas, to celebrate the mass of S. Mary every day and begging him to pray for his sins. This priest is still alive and presides over a convent of nuns, of which he was the founder.

Novice.—It is indeed good to serve such a mistress who thus comes to the help of her servants.

Monk.—Not only does she warn and reprove those who afflict them, but she also mightily defends their property.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the lord pope Innocent, who was reproved by S. Mary through Renerius when he endeavoured to impose exactions upon the Cistercian Order.

At the time when Baldwin, count of Flanders, stormed Constantinople with the crusaders, pope Innocent had by

letters enjoined the Order to send a fortieth part of all their portable property, as a grant in aid of the Holy Land. The Order however, relying upon the privileges granted to it by his predecessors, and fearing lest they should change into slavery the freedom won by their forbears, refused to submit to so serious an exaction. Whereupon Innocent raged in such anger against us that he proposed to permit the secular authorities to lay hands upon the possessions of the Order. But in the next general council, the abbots who attended, resting their hopes upon the Blessed Mother of God, the patroness and advocate of the Order, and feeling confident that this ill-conceived sentence could easily be revoked by her prayers, ordered special petitions to be said for this emergency until the next chapter, adding this also, that from the beginning of Lent the monks should make a procession with bare feet, from the chapter-house, singing the seven psalms and the litany. And this was done.

Meanwhile the Blessed Mother of God appeared to a certain monk named Renerius who was pope Innocent's confessor, and charged him in these words: "You are trying to destroy the Cistercian Order whose advocate I am, but you will not succeed. And unless you quickly reconsider your evil intentions, I will break both you yourself and all your power."

When the lord Innocent heard this message, he was terrified, because he knew Renerius to be a saintly and truthful man, and so truly did he repent of the sin he had intended, that he confirmed the privileges of the Order, adding this also, that the business of the Order should be carried through the Curia before any other. This indulgence he ratified, both with his own bull and with the signatures of all the cardinals; and was so angry with the cardinal of the Order of black monks who was the only one to resist, that he threatened to degrade him. And when our fathers were informed of these things at the next chapter they gave thanks to Christ and His Mother for a change so unexpected, and closed the enjoined petitions with an act of thanksgiving.

Novice.—I do not wonder that so mighty a queen should defend those whose advocacy she undertakes.

Monk.—You say well, for although she is the Mother of compassion yet she is not unmindful of the punishment of the unmerciful.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the punishment of the enemies of Marienſtatt.

A certain noble lady, Alison de Molsberg[1] with the consent of her husband, the Burgrave Everard, by divine inspiration had handed over some of her revenues into the hands of Dom Henry our abbot, freely and without any one gainsaying, and while she was ſtill alive, the house which is called Marienſtatt, was built. After her death certain noble relations of hers began to moleſt this new foundation with complaints, threats, plunderings and many other annoyances. But the Virgin Mary, the Holy Mother of God, the patroness and guardian of this monaſtery, so wrought with her Son, as was commonly said, that Henry of Molsberg, the chief offender, was attacked, and being condemned as having acted arbitrarily was banished from the caſtle.

Another noble, de Ziegenberg, who had much troubled this same house, was miserably slain by his own servant. A third, while haſtening to the plunder of the monaſtery, burſt asunder in the midſt on the way. Yet another who was one of the joint heirs, when he heard of these punishments, was overcome with fear, and coming to the place, withdrew his claim publicly, saying: "O Holy Lady Mary, let this be thine alone, I here renounce all part or lot in it."

The knight William of Helpenſtein,[2] urged on by his wife, who maintained that she was the heiress of the family eſtates that had been assigned to the monaſtery, took possession of the beſt farm and caused no little expense to the brethren.

[1] Countess of Froizberth, see Bk. V, 5.

[2] A caſtle under Ehrenbreilſtein, opp. Cologne.

Meanwhile a pious priest who was William's confessor, dreamt one night that he was transported to Marienstatt, where he saw the said William endeavouring to prevent a priest from celebrating the mass, and as he watched, he saw further a coal-black figure rise up against the intruder and slay him with a blow from a club. He related this vision to the knight, and assured him that he had not long to live, if he did not cease from troubling the monks, but he, protesting fretfully that he was daily urged on by the goadings of his wife, refused to listen to his counsel. He was summoned by letters from the pope for being in violent possession of some of the property, and after the judges and advocates had protracted the trial for an unconscionable time, at last they appointed two days for the parties, one for making an amicable arrangement and the other for fighting it out in the Court.

When it was found that they could come to no agreement and there were now three days left before the trial, John of Horicheim, a lay-brother in Altenberg, dreamt that night that he was in Marienstatt, and heard the glorious virgin say in clear tones: "I must depart from this place." And when the monk asked: "Whither wilt thou go, Lady?" she replied: "To my Son, to complain of William of Helpenstein, who will not suffer me to abide here in peace."

In the morning he related this vision to the knight's butler and added: "Be sure of this, that death is drawing very near to your lord, on account of his behaviour to the convent of Marienstatt." And he replied with a jest: "Never mind, we shall be glad to get rid of him." And a few days after, he lost a foot, as his punishment for his mock.

On that same day when William was riding through a wood, carrying a hawk upon his fist, he met two servants of the count of Sayn, who were leading away as a prisoner one of his own men. This man he endeavoured to rescue and in the scuffle that ensued, he was transfixed with a spear and forthwith breathed out his soul. At the same hour, a woman possessed with the devil in the village of Frisch, far distant from the castle of Helpenstein, began so to leap and clap her hands and chuckle and grin, that twelve men were scarce able

to hold her down. When asked what ailed her, she replied: "My master has just gained three souls. Know that William of Helpenstein has just been killed."

Novice.—What did she mean by saying three souls?

Monk.—Those of the slain and of the slayers, as I think, because he had the soul of the dead man in fact and of the other two in prospect.

Not long afterwards in Brisach, the devil was questioned about the soul of this William, and replied by the mouth of another woman: "My master has it safe, and because of the monks whom he despoiled, he pours into it sulphur and pitch, filling it up to the brim." Moreover his wife, who had goaded him on to so much wickedness, was with her children soon after driven out of her castle by her step-brother. For although it was considered impregnable, he entered in the night, by a scaling ladder, and cast her out with ignominy, thus avenging the wrong done to the Blessed Mother of God. From that time forward, the monastery has possessed this farm in peace until this day, by the help of the merits of the Glorious Virgin.

Novice.—You have now made it quite clear that she is the preserver of the world, the comforter of the afflicted and the faithful defender of her servants. Show me now I pray you by some example that she also gives light and understanding to the sinner, for I judge that to be a still more beautiful thing than all the rest.

Monk.—Since man can often win grace for his fellow-man, it is easy to believe that this can be won much more fully by the Mother of the Lord.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Henry, canon of S. Kunibert who was converted by the intercession of S. Mary.

There was a canon of S. Kunibert in Cologne, named Henry, who lived a very worldly life. One day when he was

riding unattended, he noticed a small bright cloud flit across his path and heard a most exceedingly clear voice speak from it: "Thy Will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This voice was of such exceeding sweetness that whenever afterwards he called it to mind, he was melted to tears. And as he paid too little attention to this gentle heavenly voice, or perhaps too little understood its meaning, he dreamt one night that he was standing in his private chapel before the altar in the presence of the image of the Blessed Mother of God. And when, according to wont, he saluted her with the angelic greeting, she replied: "Why dost thou salute me? Thou art a lost soul; unless thou amend thy life, very quickly wilt thou perish. Yet I and S. Benedict are interceding for thee."

Yet he neglected even this second warning, so entranced was he in the sweetness of the worldly life; and about six weeks later he was seized with so grievous a sickness, that extreme unction was given him, for there appeared now no hope of his life. Then at last he came back to his senses and remembered what he had heard and seen, and sending for certain Bergensian brothers of the Cistercian Order, he made his submission to them, and became a monk at the following Easter, and to this day he gives thanks that he was enlightened by the prayers of the Blessed Virgin.

Novice.—Whose was the voice from the cloud and what was its meaning?

Monk.—So far as can be gathered from what I have said, is was the voice of the Blessed Mary and of S. Benedict, for they prayed Christ that as His will was done in heaven, i.e. in the just man, so also it might be done on earth, i.e. in the youth that was then a sinner. Nor ought it to be a matter of wonder to you that sinners are enlightened by her, for *according to His name, so is His praise unto the world's end* (Ps. xlviii. 9). For the name "Mary" is interpreted "star of the sea," or "illuminator." Of how she also brings to confession and pardon those who are desperate and hardened against all grace, I will now give you some examples.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the monk who was sick in the Trappist monastery for whom S. Mary obtained the grace of confession.

In the province of Perche, there is a house of the Cistercian Order called Trappa. Here, as was told me by Dom Henry, the abbot of Scimenu who said that the story had been related to him by the abbot of the aforesaid monastery, there happened this that I am about to tell you, which had then recently taken place.

There was a monk there who was sick to death, and two monks were deputed to attend upon him. Once when these two had gone out together and the sick man was lying alone, there entered two evil spirits, who stood together in a corner of the room, clapped their hands and chuckled, saying to each other: "To-morrow at the third hour we shall have the great pleasure of taking this man's soul to hell."

Immediately the sick man began to tremble and grow pale from the bitter stings of conscience; for before his conversion he had committed certain grievous sins which shame had prevented him from confessing either when a clerk in the world, or as a novice, or as a monk in the monastery. And now, as he looked round in terror he saw in the opposite corner of the room a most beautiful matron who thus replied to the grinning demons: "Do not rejoice too much, for I shall advise him how he may escape your jaws." And when she had said this, the attendants returned, and the whole vision disappeared. Uuderstanding the advice to mean full confession and the matron to be the Holy Mother of God, whom he had invoked, as I think, in that extremity of danger, he caused the prior to be summoned, to whom, helped by the merits of the Blessed Virgin, he confessed all his sins, fully and devoutly, and begged him to disclose them all to the abbot, who was at that time absent from the monastery. Then, anointed with the holy oil, and fortified by the sacrament of the body of the Lord, at the hour foretold by the demons, he breathed out his spirit in the humble hope of pardon.

CHAPTER X.

Also of two beggars who lay ill in a hospital of Paris whom she urged to confession.

Two paupers in Paris received a similar mercy from the Blessed Virgin, as was told me by our brother Lambert who said that he was studying there at the time. And when they were brought into the hospital, which is situated just opposite her oratory in the parvis, the most Merciful Virgin herself who cares for all men, deigned to appear to a certain religious who was chaplain to this hospital and said: "My friend, see that most watchful care is bestowed on these two poor men, because they are in a perilous state and demons are hovering round them, seeking how they may injure them." And when she had said this to the priest and he to clear his conscience had exhorted them once and again without any effect, he added at last: "Wretched men, I know that you are in most grievous sin and at the point of death, and unless you confess, you will go to hell and be tortured with everlasting pains." Then they, terrified, and, as is most surely to be believed, enlightened by the prayers of the blessed mother of God, made a good confession and died like good Christians, giving grief to the devils, and joy to the holy angels in Heaven,

Novice.—Such things are delightful to hear of.

Monk.—Not only sinners who have faith without works, are enlightened by her, as has been shown, but even apostates from the faith are reconciled to Christ through her, and this is a proof of still greater compassion. Of this you have a clear example in the twelfth chapter of the second book, of the young man near Floreffe who denied Christ and gave himself over to the devil and yet found pardon through her prayers.

Novice.—The same story is told of Theophilus of Alexandria. And now since you have told me enough of her goodness to sinners, I pray you also to show me by illustrations, the kind of revelation with which she consoles the good.

Monk.—How marvellously the Holy Mother of God consoles her faithful servants, you shall understand from the few examples that I will now lay before you.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Peter the one-eyed abbot of Clairvaux whom S. Mary blessed in the Church of Speyer.

Circumstances arose in which it became necessary that some of the abbots of our Order should be sent on business to the Emperor Henry, the son of Frederic. Chief among these both in dignity and saintliness was Dom Peter, the one-eyed abbot of Clairvaux, of whom we have already spoken in the eleventh chapter of the sixth book.

And because the abbot of Citeaux was unable to come himself, he sent his prior in his place. When they had come to Speyer and said their prayers in the church of the blessed mother of God, which is a building of stupendous size, and all the others had quickly risen from their knees and were walking round the church, admiring its architecture, Peter, whose thoughts and interests lay not in corruptible buildings, but in the architecture of the heavenly Jerusalem, continued in prayer.

At length they all went out, and at the door of the church were greeted with much reverence by the canons, who very warmly invited them to dine, and one of the abbots asked in whose honour the church had been consecrated. When the clerks replied: "In honour of our Lady," the abbot of Clairvaux added without thinking: "Yes, I felt sure of that." The prior of Citeaux noticed these words, but said nothing at the time; later when they had all left the city, he remembered them and said to the abbot: "Tell me, how did you know that the monastery of Speyer had been consecrated in honour of our Lady?" And he, grieved for the words he had

let fall, replied: "It seemed to me altogether fitting that the patroness of so wonderful a building should be no other than the Mother of God and Queen of Heaven." The prior, knowing well the man's saintliness, and feeling sure from his reply that some revelation had been vouchsafed him in the church went on: "I am taking the place of the lord abbot of Citeaux on this journey, and on his authority I enjoin upon you to tell me the simple truth. Then Peter, constrained by obedience, replied submissively: "While I was lying prostrate before the altar, earnestly beseeching mercy for my sins and for the negligences of the journey, the blessed Virgin Mary herself appeared to me, and in these words said over me the blessing which our Order is wont to say over those who have come back from a journey: 'Almighty and Everlasting God, have mercy upon this Thy servant, and whatever harm has come to him on his journey from sight of evil or from hearing of idle talk, do Thou in Thine unspeakable mercy abundantly pardon, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'" All this was told me by an abbot of our Order, whose house this same Peter frequently visited, for he understood from this blessing that she was indeed the patroness of the place.

Novice.—How happy a prayer was his, to merit the blessing of the glorious Virgin.

Monk.—And she is wont to comfort with her blessing, not only those who pray, but those also who sing God's praises.

CHAPTER XII.

Also of monks and lay-brothers in Hemmenrode, whom she blessed when at vigils in the sight of Henry the lay-brother.

Henry the lay-brother in Hemmenrode, whom I spoke of in the 5th chapter of the 5th book when I was discoursing

of demons, often, especially on the church's festivals, saw the Glorious Virgin among the monks when they were occupied in praising God with singing. One night he saw her come from the choir of the monks, and enter the choir of the lay-brothers, holding in her arms the Son of God who was born of her. As she went round, stirring the brethren to further devotion, as the abbot does, she halted before some who were watchful and earnest in prayer, showing them her Son and blessing them, congratulating them on their devotion. But quickly she passed by any who were lukewarm, or who were allowing themselves to be overcome with sleep, nor offered any comfort to them. And this same lay-brother took diligent note of each of his brethren thus singled out in this celestial visitation and told their names to the lord Herman, then prior, and now abbot of Marienstatt ; and it was from his lips that I heard this.

Novice.—I remember that you told me a similar story in the 35th chapter of the 1st book about Godfrey the monk of Villers.

Monk.—With so great love does the Blessed Virgin enfold those who are her devoted servants, that not only when they pray, not only when they praise, but even when they sleep, she blesses them.

CHAPTER XIII.

Also of the same lay-brother, and of other sick lay-brothers, whom she visited in the night and blessed them.

One night when this same lay-brother was sitting on his bed in the infirmary and was saying his prayers while the others were sleeping, he saw Our Lady in great glory enter the cell, with a certain monk whose name I will not mention going in front of her, and two matrons following. And

first she lifted up her hand over his head, and then she went in and out among the beds of the sick and blessed them as they slept, and finally she returned to him, and again raising her hand above his head, she said: "May the blessing of the Lord abide upon all in this place" and so went out.

Novice.—If sleepers are thus visited at night by the mirror of all purity, it is most necessary that the Religious should study to lie so orderly and composedly in their beds, that the maiden eyes should find no offence in them.

Monk.—Most rightly have you judged. I will give you an illustration which I remember to have heard from my master when I was a novice on probation.

CHAPTER XIV.

Also of monks whom she blessed in their sleep, one only being left out because he was lying in unseemly guise.

A certain monk who, as often happens, was saying his prayers one night when unable to sleep, saw in the dormitory a woman of wonderful beauty. She went round the beds of the sleepers and gave a blessing to each one, leaving out only one monk from whom she turned away her eyes. The watcher carefully noted this man, and told him in the morning the vision he had seen, whereupon he confessed that he had lain that night somewhat carelessly, relaxing a little from the strict rule of the Order. My master could not tell me whether he had laid aside his girdle or taken off his sandals or unfastened his tunic.

Novice.—If this monk lost his blessing for so small a fault, I think that he must be worthy of punishment who goes to sleep habitually lying in a disordered and immodest fashion.

Monk.—Of this you have a terrible example in the 33rd chapter of the 5th book, where a lay-brother, lying asleep in an immodest attitude was kissed by the devil in the form of a nun and straightway fell sick and died in a few days. For we can both sin and deserve well in our sleep. For what we think of during our waking hours, or to what we are impelled whether good or ill, these things often come back to us in dreams. As in a chain when it is pulled or jerked, motion generates motion, so in the sleeper what has gone before, whether thought, action or consent, induces good or evil results.

Novice.—I like what you say. Will you go on now about the consolations of the righteous?

CHAPTER XV.

Of the appearance of the B.V.M. with S. Elizabeth and S. Mary Magdalene to the aforesaid brother.

Monk.—A certain monk of blameless life, whose name I must not give, repeatedly asked this lay-brother Henry that he would intercede for him when next he should be visited by the Blessed Mother of God. He gave this promise and one day after saying compline in the chapel of the grange of which he was head, he was praying for him, when as he prayed, there appeared to him three matrons of wonderful beauty. And while he remained bewildered by their beauty and wondered within himself who they were and whence they came, one of them made answer to his thoughts in these words: "I am Mary Magdalene, this," pointing with her finger, "is the queen of the universe, the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, and the third is Elizabeth." And she added: "Thou art praying for the monk"; and here she spoke his name, "rather hast thou need that he should pray for thee." And so they disappeared. The same lay-brother saw a dove

descend upon the head of this same monk, when as deacon he was reading the gospel at mass, and abide there to the end of the reading.

CHAPTER XVI.

Life of Dom Christian, monk of Hemmenrode.

In the same monastery and at the same time as this lay-brother Henry, there was a monk, who was Christian both in name and conduct. Him Our Lady used to comfort in many ways, making clear to him hidden things. I will tell you shortly, as far as I have been able to learn it, the life of this blessed man both before and after his conversion ; but I shall relate nothing about him, except what has been told me by Religious men who saw and knew him. When still a scholar, he used to avoid the schools and travel through the provinces. One night he was entertained in the house of a woman whose daughter suffered from scab in the head ; and she kept asking him if he knew of any cure for the disease, and would not believe him when he disclaimed any knowledge of it, for she said that scholars knew all kinds of experiments ; and so, overcome at last by her importunity, that he might rid himself of her, he said : " Take some house-leek, some soot and some salt and make an ointment of them ; anoint your daughter's head with this and she will soon be better." And although such ingredients were really hurtful for the disease, the mother nevertheless did as she was told, and very quickly the child grew quite well, not, I think, because of the medicine, but because of the simple-heartedness of the scholar. Another time when he was sleeping in a strange house, a necessity of nature compelled him to get up clad in trousers only, and the devil, in the guise of a naked woman, met him and leapt upon his bare back. And when by no effort could he shake him off, he ran round the room till morning, suffering great fatigue both of body and mind. When ordained priest he

became chaplain to the count of Lootz, and celebrated masses in his caſtle. Now the son of the count, knowing him to be both a simple-minded and a timid man, wished to frighten him, and put on a bearskin, and going on all fours like a beaſt came thus to him when sitting alone in the chapel and growled at him. Chriſtian was terrified at the sight and almoſt beside himself, snatched up a knife and ſtruck the boy so violently in the neck, that he fell over almoſt dead. But after a little time he recovered his wits, and now was terrified for the prieſt's life and said: "Flee maſter Chriſtian because you have killed the count's son"; and he fled in terror, and when he came to the caſtle gate, he said to the porter: "Open and let me out for I have killed the count's son"; you see what simplicity? As soon as the news was brought to the parents and family, they made sore lament. Nevertheless, at the petition of the boy himself, Chriſtian was recalled and his fault pardoned and againſt all hope, the wounded boy quickly recovered. This was told me by Walter Birkbeck of blessed memory.

Once when he was saying the commendatory prayer at a funeral, the dead man rose up; all who were present fled away in a panic and Chriſtian himself fled until he was ſtopped by a neighbouring river. The dead man followed and cried after him: "Sir, there is a fine sheep at my house, will you take it and pray for me?" And so the dead man returned to the bier from which he had risen and was buried.

Besides the above mentioned chapel he had a regular church of which he was paſtor; to this he had occasion to go frequently, and on the way to it, there was a river to cross. When the water was low, he would ride across upon his horse, and when it was in flood, he used to go over in a boat. Now one day, when he reached it, he found the water to be higher than he expected; and while he was wondering what to do, as he did not dare to truſt himself and his horse in the water, and there was no boat to be found, behold! there appeared the blessed Mary Magdalene, who took him by the cloak above the neck and put him down on the further bank, so that he

found himself there still sitting upon his horse. And so he came joyfully to church and began to celebrate the divine mysteries, having no one else present except the rustic who looked after the church. But the blessed Mary Magdalene, who had brought him thither, remained to take part in his mass. For as often as he turned to the people to say: "The Lord be with you," he saw a most worshipful matron, pacing to and fro in the chapel. Now knowing that there was no mortal there, save the aforesaid custodian, when the mass was over, he called his man and asked him if he had seen anyone in the church. And he said that he too had seen her.

Now this venerable priest, considering the dangers of the world, the temptations of the devil and the incentives of the flesh, by the guidance of divine grace left the world and took the dress of Religion at Hemmenrode. One day when he was prostrate in prayer in the room of the novices, and thinking upon the weakness of his body, the severity of the Order and the pains of purgatory, he began to grow weary. And immediately he felt a marvellous power which separated his soul from his body. He saw also a tomb being built before him with marvellous workmanship. And lo! he saw entering by the window the Holy Mother of God, followed by a great company of virgins. And he heard a voice saying: "This is the Lady of Nazareth." Then she raised the priest's lifeless body by the head while the Emperor Frederick, grandfather of the Frederick who is now Emperor, lifted it by the feet, and reverently they lowered it into the tomb. Then, the Blessed Virgin with a multitude of angels following her, returned to the heavens, taking with her the soul of the buried man and guarded it unhurt, though crowds of demons followed, breathing out fire and smoke.

At length he was taken to a mighty fire and the angels told him that after death he must return to that place and pass through this fire; and then immediately he found himself restored to his body. Never was he willing to say anything to anyone about the mode and cause of that passing. He did however testify that the soul was full of eyes, and that it had so great knowledge, so long as it was deprived of the body, that after coming back to life, he was astonished

at the obscurity of his ordinary vision. When asked of the forms and appearance of the angels and demons, he replied that he saw the angels under the form of most beautiful maidens and the demons in the guise of ravens.

This reminds me of what was said recently by one whose soul was taken out of his body and then returned to it. The soul, he said, that is taken from the body finally without the prospect of return, sees other souls and the angels actually as they are ; but when it is to return, it sees them only under figures and forms, for the sake of the living.

Novice.—That seems to me probable enough. But what was the signification of the priest's burial by Our Lady and the Emperor Frederick?

Monk.—According to what was told me by the aforesaid Walter, who with very great trouble and very secretly, succeeded in eliciting from him the meaning of this burial, the Blessed Virgin showed him by this vision how much she loved him and how great was his merit in the sight of God. As if she had said: " There is none of greater dignity on earth than the reigning Emperor Frederick, and yet even he is unworthy to assist at your burial." So it was that he understood it. Moreover he often saw demons under different forms, sometimes as men, sometimes as animals or reptiles, as I remember I described more fully in the 6th chapter of the 5th book. Once when he was standing among others to sing the psalms at the hour of sext, he saw, set up in the middle of the choir, a table most beautifully prepared. And there came three matrons of wonderful beauty, bringing priestly robes and unfolding them upon the table, they presented them to him.

At another time when at the beginning of lauds, the psalm " God be merciful unto us " was being sung, he saw the right hand of God spread over the choir and giving the blessing to the convent. On account of this, the concession was made to the lay-brethren that they should sing that psalm on all festivals.

Novice.—I wonder how this saint came to so great favour.

Monk.—Chiefly by the virtues of the soul, that is, charity, singleness of mind, humility and the like. For the kingdom

of God is in these, rather than in speech or bodily toil. For neither preaching nor manual labour are of much avail without inward virtues. Truly he was of so great humility that if he met any of his fellow monks, he would fold his sleeves together and draw aside lest he should touch them with his robe. When asked the reason for this, he replied: "I am a sinner and unworthy to touch these holy men, or to be touched by them." Before his conversion, he had begotten two sons, out of wedlock, namely Henry, a lay-brother of Villers, a saintly man about whom we spoke in the 31st chapter of the 4th book, and John a monk of Hemmenrode who is still living.

Novice.—Why do we see greater favour in revelations of this kind, granted to sinners and lapsed upon their repentance, than to those who have kept their innocence.

Monk.—*Where sin did abound, grace did much more abound* (Rom. v. 20).

And this happens by the unspeakable mercy of God, both that the lapsed may not despair because of the sins that are passed and that the innocent may not fall into pride because of their innocence. Once when I was sitting in a gathering of the devoted women of our Order and we were talking of visions of this kind, one of the virgins said to me: "You see how God reveals His secret things not to us, but to such an one," pointing with her finger to one of the others who was thought not to have joined the Order as a maiden. To whom I replied as above adding this: "You will perhaps ascribe this grace to your virginity, but God desires you to be humble even more than to be virgins." For well I understood that pride had been the motive of what she said. That the virtue of virginity does sometimes exalt the minds of such women may be seen more plainly from the words of another of these devout women. "Assuredly," she said, "I who am a virgin shall not be like widows who have borne sons and daughters."

Yet how much a really humble virginity is pleasing to God, and how marvellously he reveals secret things to them, the following chapters will declare.

Novice.—I remember that you said above, that merit lies

rather in the virtues of the soul than in any outward works. Why then do we every day mortify ourselves in prayers and study, in vigils and fasts, in singing and labouring with our hands?

Monk.—It is possible to do all these without merit for life eternal, but never are the emotions of the virtues unprofitable. Whatever is done without charity and the other virtues is dead. Hear now the useful distinction according to the rule of theology, by which you may know wherein merit consists. Truly merit consists in grace effectively, in free-will occasionally, in virtues formally, in the emotions of virtue essentially, in the works of virtue, such as prayer and the rest that you enumerated just now, instrumentally. I would explain this distinction to you more fully, but that now I want to hasten on to those other visions of the blessed saint which are still untold.

Once when he was grievously sick and his attendant was urging him to take a little food, he said that on every day for the last seven days, he had been visited by our Lord and His most gracious Mother, and he had been so delightfully refreshed by their visitation that he had no desire for food or drink. Again at another time when he was ill with a mortal sickness, and was telling some of his visions to his son John, whom I mentioned before, the lord Gevard, who at that time was in charge of the infirmary and who afterwards became our abbot, and who told me this himself, ran to the prior and told him that Dom Christian was telling great wonders to his son John. The prior went to him at once and sat down beside him, and with intention asked him if he wished to say anything in the way of confession and when he answered: "I have made my confession," the prior added: "I beg you then to say something to me for my edification." Then he: "What shall I say to you? Even now, Our Lady was standing by me with her blessed Son, and because through my bodily weakness I could not say my hours, they, themselves helped me." He had always been accustomed to say specials hours. All these things Gevard heard himself, for he was sitting behind the prior. And when they asked him what dress they wore, he replied: "Cowls even like ours."

For they deigned to show themselves to him in the very dress that he had adopted in love of them. And dying thus in happy ending, he was received by those who had visited him on his death-bed and taken in glory to the eternal mansions. Amen.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the sacristan of Locheim, who at night saw S. Mary descend upon the altar.

Not long ago, a monk of our Order, Adam by name, staying with us on one of his journeyings, told us among other things some wonderful stories of Our Lady, which he testified were of what had actually taken place in his monastery; two of these I will tell now, reserving the others for more fitting places.

Now this house of his is called Locheim, and is in Saxony, and he has charge of the church there and is well known as a good and religious man. One night when he went into the chapel before matins, he saw Our Lady, to whom the chapel is dedicated, seated in great glory upon the altar. This vision greatly rejoiced him for the hope that his service was acceptable to her. On another occasion when he was opening the doors of the chapel and had come to the screen, where guests are wont to stand, he saw a demon lying upon a tomb in the guise of a very hideous man. He made the sign of the cross, but the phantom did not move, though when he approached nearer it disappeared. Then that he might the more confound the demon, he sat down upon the tomb and remained there until he had recited the seven penitential psalms.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Also of a monk of the same monastery who at vigils saw S. Mary go round and wipe the face of each monk, leaving out only two.

Another monk of the same house, a man worthy of much favour, saw Our Lady one night go round the choir while they were singing the psalms and wipe the faces of all the monks but two. Of these two, one soon became an apostate, and it is not yet known what became of the other.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of another monk of the same house to whom the Blessed Mary appeared in the air above the altar, surrounded by a great number of saints.

In the same monastery there was a monk who one night, thnking the bell had rung for matins, got up in haste and went into the church ; and when he came in front of the chancel, he saw in the air above the altar, a circle of exceeding bright light like a rainbow and in this circle he saw the Son of God, our Saviour, with his most Blessed Mother, and around them on all sides a great company of saints, especially those whose relics were contained in the church. He knew their names, because he had once been sacristan there, though I do not know if he is the same sacristan as was mentioned above. While he was standing there, Our Lady said to two angels : " Bring him to me." And when this was done, the Blessed Virgin bade him read the writing round her crown, and as he could not do this, she said to the angels : " Put him down upon the ground and when he has sought pardon there and said the angels' salutation, bring him again." This was done, but still he could by no means read the

inscription. After he had been set down and brought back three times, he succeeded at last in reading and understanding the writing and received the command that he should reveal it to no man. And when the angels had again placed him on earth, the vision disappeared.

Novice.—I wonder if Our Lady ever visits good women as she visits men.

Monk.—There is neither male nor female in her eyes. She was born woman and she herself gave birth to the chief of all men, even Christ. Both sexes she visits and consoles, to both she reveals her secrets. That this is so, I will show you by examples rather than in words.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the visions of the noble maiden of Quida.

In a town of France called Quida, there was a maiden both of noble birth and of a religious mind, but she was paralysed. Her father, being a man of high position and rich, appointed a priest to celebrate the divine mysteries for her and liberally supplied him with assistants and an annual revenue. She gave all her attention to prayer, fasting and meditation, and so fed upon the charm of these occupations that she was nauseated with any bodily food, and could not take any of it, but a little grape juice. She was extremely hospitable and by this virtue earned the spirit of prophecy. She venerated our Order in the highest degree, and it is said to have often happened to her, that when any of our monks or abbots intended to go aside and use her hospitality, she herself foreknew their coming and would gleefully foretell it in this fashion: "On such and such a day, such and such abbots or monks are coming to us; please make all the necessary preparations"; and so it would fall out. It was

granted her to see a wonderful vision about our Order, which very much enhanced her love for it. At the time of a general chapter, she saw a ladder of marvellous beauty, set up to heaven, and the Lord leaning upon the ladder and looking down upon the chapter. The sides and steps of it were of such splendour, as surpassed the rays of the sun.

Novice.—What then does this vision seem to you to signify?

Monk.—Although all the subjects, handled in this chapter by the abbots, who had collected there from all parts of the world, were suggested by divine inspiration, there can be no doubt that holy angels, descending and ascending, reported them to Christ, in whose honour all was being done.

Novice.—This holy virgin seems in her vision to have matched the holy patriarch Jacob, whom scripture relates to have seen a similar vision at Bethel.

Monk.—In human judgment, this would seem to be the greater vision, because that took place in sleep and this occurred in full wakefulness and in ecstasy.

When at the next chapter, this vision was told to the abbots, they, rejoicing in the Holy Spirit cried: "*How dreadful is this place, this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven* (Gen. xxviii. 17).

Another time when on the day of the purification of Our Lady, it happened by God's providence, that all her clergy and attendants were absent, she lying alone said sadly to herself: "You are now lying here alone, nor paying any homage as the whole church is doing to-day to the Blessed Mother of God," and while she so pondered, her soul was in marvellous fashion drawn out of her body by the power of God and carried by an angel to the heavenly Jerusalem. And there she saw a vast procession of all the Orders of that heavenly city. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and all the rest of the faithful, walking two by two and carrying lighted candles. All were singing the antiphons or responses for the day, according to the custom of the church militant and were observing the due stations. The angel who brought the virgin thither gave her as a companion to another virgin of similar merit and put a lighted candle in her hand. No tongue can tell

the beauty and glory of all, and yet each one had his own degree of radiance. And the Saviour of the world who is the Head of all the saints, the very splendour of glory and the sun of righteousness, clothed in pontificals, wearing the mitre upon His head with the staff, gloves and ring and the other episcopal ornaments, came last with his Mother, whose beauty filled all the heavenly host with wonder. And after the third station He began the antiphon: "This day the Virgin Mary presented the boy Jesus in the temple etc.," they entered the temple whose walls were gold and the foundations precious stones. Then began the introit of the mass which was chanted by all together. Meanwhile Christ went to the altar and after the Kyrie Eleison had been sung by alternative choirs, and then the "Gloria in Excelsis" which He Himself began, the blessed proto-martyr Stephen read the Epistle from the book of Malachi the prophet, and then S. John the evangelist, robed in dalmatic read the gospel from S. Luke: "*As soon as the days of her purification were accomplished, etc.* (S. Luke ii. 22). When this was finished, the Lord, according to the use of our Order, came back to the step and received the candles from those who presented them. And now the virgin, feeling in her spirit that she was about to return to her body, was reluctant to offer her candle, even though the angel signed to her to do so, because she desired to take it back with her to earth. Whereupon the angel, considering and approving this desire of hers, broke the candle into two pieces in her hand, taking away the upper piece, and leaving the rest to her. And so having returned to the body she found that she was still holding that piece clasped in her hand. A great number of candles were fashioned from this, and perhaps, even to this day their miraculous powers remain. For sick folk grow well when they drink of water that has been poured over them. So clear and sublime was the revelation, that she could in nowise understand the manner of it and when questioned could only reply in the words of the apostle: "Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth" (II Cor. xii.2). Dom Eustace, abbot of Hemmenrode, our visitor, hearing of this vision from several abbots, in his eagerness to know

the truth went presently to the virgin and heard it from her own mouth, just as it has here been told.

Novice.—I think this is even as marvellous as the vision of the apostle who testified that he had been caught up to the third heaven.

Monk.—Do you know what "the third heaven" is?

Novice.—No.

Monk.—The first heaven is that visible to bodily sight, the second to the soul, the third to the imagination. The apostle used this vision of the imagination in his being caught up, just as did this virgin. What they saw, that they understood. If indeed you seek to know where each is placed, we may say that the first heaven is the sky, the second the place of the stars, the third the empyrean. In this last will dwell the bodies of the elect after their glorious resurrection. Whether this virgin was caught up to this heaven with her body or without, I cannot tell, God knoweth. But God showed her another vision, much more excellent even than this. Once when she was meditating upon the profound difficulty of eternal predestination and upon the ineffable mysteries, and the remedy of the divine Incarnation, she fell into ecstasy, and saw herself in the presence of a maiden all crystalline, i.e. one who appeared as bright and transparent as crystal, and in her womb she saw a most beautiful infant, crowned with the royal diadem. This diadem had moreover four branches growing from it, which, as she looked, grew and increased, fed by the brain of the maiden, and became trees, and soon filled the four quarters of the world. Whose fruits were the most beautiful, of wonderful odour and of marvellous savour. And behold beneath their branches was seen the whole human race, from the first created Adam to the last man who should be born at the end of the world. But only the elect were able to pluck of the fruit of the tree and feed upon it; the reprobate could neither touch it nor eat of it. In this vision she received so much divine knowledge that afterwards whenever she spoke with anyone, she knew at once, whether that soul was predestined to life or to perdition. If indeed he was predestined to life, she delighted in talking with him as with a fellow citizen; but

if fore-doomed, she quickly withdrew from all further converse with him.

Novice.—These are indeed most wonderful things that you tell me.

Monk.—If God show so great and marvellous things to the just while on their journey, what do you think He will show them when they reach their home (1 Cor. ii. 9)?

Once when this same virgin had washed the corporal, and was drying it upon a fair linen cloth, spread upon her knees in the rays of the sun shining through the window, a matron of most worshipful countenance came in to her, and laid upon the corporal an infant of exceeding beauty whom she was carrying in her arms; and so departed. And when she sought to move the child, not knowing who He was, He said: "Suffer me to lie upon my own linen cloth," and so as she gazed, He disappeared. And she knew that it was Christ who under the species of bread had often been enfolded in this same linen upon the holy altar.

To this virgin many other visions came which have not been told to me, but which perchance have been written down by others. It is not very long since she left this world to receive the reward of her labour and her patience.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the devout Christina, who saw S. Mary on the day of the Assumption, let down her crown from heaven upon the convent of Heisterbach.

In the mount of S. Walburgis, two miles from Cologne, a monastery of our Order, there died a few years ago, a devout virgin named Christina. To her the Lord and His Blessed Mother vouchsafed many revelations, one of which I will tell you not in orderly fashion but somewhat disjointedly.

Once on the festival of the Assumption of our most glorious Lady when the before-mentioned Eustace our abbot was visiting us, and with him there were several other abbots, on that most sacred night, the aforesaid virgin saw a vision about our monastery, as follows:

When the abbot, after the reading of the gospel, had begun the hymn *Te Deum laudamus,* she, while standing in the choir, fell into an ecstasy and saw the heaven opened above our monastery. Now at that time, the whole of the church was built of wood, but she saw both fronts of it to be made of gold. Raising her eyes and looking up to heaven, she saw the glorious Mother of God, the patroness of all our Order, seated on the most splendid throne and around her a multitude of saints who appeared, all of them, in the early prime of life. Now when the choir of monks sang with devotion: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth," the Blessed Virgin, delighting in their devotion, let down upon the convent with a golden chain, her crown of marvellous beauty, like those that are often hung in churches. In the place of the usual knot, there was a gem very bright and precious and on it was inscribed: "O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Maria." From this gem proceeded three small arms which supported the crown as it hung. And rays proceeding from the name "Maria" lit up the names of all the monks in the choir, which appeared inscribed upon the circle of the crown. Among these names was great diversity, both in position and in brightness, and the names of some who had joined us quite lately shone in greater splendour than of others who had for many years lived a laborious life in the Order. From which it may be gathered, that in the sight of God the merits of His servants do not lie in length of service, or in toil of body, so much as in true fervour of devotion. But when in their chanting they came to the passage: "In Thee O Lord have I trusted; let me never be confounded," she withdrew the crown again into heaven, saying in clear tones: "As I to-day am rejoicing in glory, so also shall all these be with me for ever."

Now before anything was known among us about this vision, Theodoric Lureke came in the morning to our abbot

Dom Henry, and lamented to him, that he in that same most sacred night, had been unable to feel any real fervour of devotion, until they came to that place in the hymn: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth"; and when the vision was told him later, he marvelled much at it. Before this same devout virgin came to the Order, being now of marriageable age, she was standing during the mass in a certain church, when after the reading of the gospel, the server had gone out, thinking that he could return before the "Holy, Holy, Holy," and the celebrant having finished his secret prayers, had said: "The Lord be with you," "Lift up your hearts," and the rest that follows there, the image of the Mother of God upon the altar, made each response. She, noticing the strangeness of the voice, did not doubt that, in the absence of the server, the Glorious Virgin had by the mouth of her image, supplied what was lacking. And surely this impresses upon us, that we should never be careless or negligent, since the saints have so great care concerning that ineffable sacrament. And how the invocation of the glorious name of the Lord's Mother is medicine and health to the sick, the following examples will show.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of Otto, prefect of Xanten, who was healed of a double sickness by the prayers of S. Mary.

Otto, a man of noble birth and at one time prefect of Xanten, suffered in his youth under a twofold infirmity, to wit, an acute fever and a fistula (in the more secret parts of his body.) He concealed this last from the doctors from modesty and often called upon Our Lady to restore him to health. But at last, the fever increased to such an extent, that his life was despaired of, he was taken from his bed and laid upon the floor, and a candle placed in his hand, as is customary with lay-folk, and then, as it seemed to all present, he died; when

behold ! the Blessed Virgin on whom he had called, appeared to his spirit accompanied by her Son whom she addressed on behalf of the youth in these words : " My Son, grant me this youth." " Mother," He replied, " he is yours." At this word, the sick man, or as it seemed to the mourners, the dead man, began at once to breathe again and to grow strong to such an extent that he desired them to put him back in his bed. Thus by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, he was completely cured of the fever ; but being still much troubled by the fistula, he requested that prayers for his recovery from an unspecified disease addressed especially to Our Lady might be made at every mass throughout the whole province of Utrecht.

And because he prefered a spiritual to a material medicine, before all the masses had been said, the power of the sacrament broke the fistula and emptied it of its poison. So was he altogether healed and took the cross in gratitude. At the same time coming to Vaucelles, a house of our Order, he found there Dom Walter, formerly his master, and at that time, a newly received lay-brother in that monastery and now, the abbot of Villers, to whom he recited in order the whole story of his miraculous cure, adding : " Would that you had not been here, that we might have crossed the sea together." And when Walter questioned him about certain vices to which he knew him to have been addicted in the past, whether he had cleansed himself from them, and received a negative reply, he added : " In truth you are showing but poor gratitude to Him and to her who gave you back your health." Later there arose a schism about him in the bishopric of Trèves which was the cause of many evils. All this was told me by the abbot Walter. And now I will show you, by the story of a miracle, the virtue of the name of Mary.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of a clerk to whom S. Mary gave a new tongue in the place of one that had been cut out by the Albigensian heretics.

Years ago when catholics were making a crusade against the Albigensian heretics, and already there was great bitterness between the combatants, two honest clerks were journeying through the land, and seeing an abandoned church by the road side, one said to the other: "It is Saturday, let us go into this church and say a mass in honour of Our Lady." For they were carrying with them, book, chalice and sacrimental vestments. Before the mass was finished, information was given to the heretics, who entered the church in an armed band, dragged the priest outside and cut out his tongue by the roots. With much difficulty his companion brought the injured man to Cluny and commended him to the care of the monks, who, as catholics and religious eagerly received him and showed him all kindness, as a well-known catholic priest, cruelly mutilated because of his faith in Christ and the honour he paid to His Blessed Mother. Now on the night of the Epiphany, when the solemn vigils were being sung, he summoned the attendants who were waiting on him, by knocking on the floor with a stick. When they came, he made signs to them that he wished to be carried down to the church. At first they refused, wishing to spare him the fatigue, but when he persisted, they carried him down to the church and set him down before an altar. And when he had called upon the Mother of compassion with great fervour and devotion, she appeared to him, carrying in her hand a piece of flesh in the shape of a tongue, and thus answered his prayers: "Because thou wast deprived of thy tongue, for the sake of thy faith in my tongue and for the honour shown to me, behold, I restore it to thee; open thy mouth." And when he did, she put her fingers into his mouth, and joined and united this same piece of flesh to the root of the

tongue that had been cut out, and so disappeared. Immediately he broke forth into praise in the words of the angel: "Hail Mary, full of grace," to the end. And as he continued repeating the salutation, his attendants ran to him, as well as the monks from the choir, and all glorified God and His Mother for so plain and so joyful a miracle. The clerk was not unmindful of the mercy shown to him, and became a monk in that same monastery.

Now about this time John the scholasticus of Xanten was in the provence of the Albigenses with the army of the Lord, and heard of this marvellous miracle; and on his way home, he went to Cluny and asked if he might see this monk. His request was granted and he himself saw the tongue and heard from the monks' own mouth all that has here been told. This same John told us that it was whiter than the flesh around it and still carried the scar in the place where it had been cut off. The whole convent of the Cluniac monks is the witness of this miracle, even to this day.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of Adam the monk of Locheim who was cured by S. Mary of eczema in the head, and of the cures that she wrought in Montpellier and of her image at Sardanay.

Adam, priest and monk of Locheim whom I mentioned before in the 17th chapter, knowing that I loved to hear of miracles of this character, of his great kindness told me about himself, this that I am now going to relate to you. When, he said, I was a boy, my head was so full of eczema, that the other scholars refused to sit or read with me, because of the foul odour arising from it. The first prayer that I learnt was the angels salutation, and as a boy I used it frequently. I had been placed in Münster in Westphalia for my education, and as I went to school or to matins, I used daily to

pass through a certain conventual church, and thus of necessity continually before a chapel dedicated in honour of the Mother of God. And regularly without fail, I used to make before it three genuflexions and repeat three salutations. One night, thinking that the bell had rung for matins, I got up in a fright, and when I came to the aforementioned monastery and found the church still closed, I saluted Our Lady in my usual way, by three times bending my knees and repeating the words of the angel. Then rising I found the door open, and so great was the light in the church, that it was like the blaze of the noon-day sun. When I had entered wondering, I saw seven most beautiful matrons sitting before the high altar, one in the midst who was more dazzling than the others, and six on one side and the other i.e. on her right hand three and on her left three. And the Lady in the midst called me and when I had drawn near, she said to me: "My lad, why has not care been paid to your head?" And when I replied: "Lady, my friends have done all that they could but to no profit," she went on: "Do you know who I am?" and when I said: "No, Lady," she replied: "I am the Mother of Christ and the patroness of this church. Because you have been zealous to keep me in mind, I will cure you. Take the fruit of spindle wood and have your head washed with it three times before mass in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and immediately you will be cured." And when she added: "Come here to me," I went and kneeled down before her and she placed her hand upon my head, saying: "From this hour till the day of your death, your head shall no more trouble you." Later in the morning, I told all this to my nurse, and she went down into the nearest valley and gathered the fruit that had been indicated and with it washed my head and immediately I was healed. Never from that hour have I had any pain in my head and this of itself is a marvellous thing.

Novice.—It is plain that there is nothing more efficacious and no remedy more sure than the medicine of the Blessed Virgin.

Monk.—And no wonder. She it was that produced the

medicine of the whole human race, wherefore it is written: *" Let the earth bring forth fruit after its kind* (Gen. i. 24); i.e. let Mary bring forth the man Christ. When he took a living body, " He did not despise the Virgin's womb." Also more expressly in Ecclesiasticus: *" The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth* (Eccles. xxxviii. 4); i.e. a Saviour out of the flesh of a virgin. *Jesus* by interpretation is *Saviour* or *Healing*. For a saviour is a doctor, salvation is medicine.

That Mary is earth, Isaiah witnesses (Is. xlv. 8). Moreover that He was created out of this earth (Is. xlv. 8), and the apostle says: " that *He was made of a woman "* (Gal. iv 4). What wonder then if with her are all healing medicines, since she is the *garden of spices. My beloved,* she says, *" came down into his garden* i.e. into my womb, to the beds of spices (Cant. vi. 2). Consider Rocamadour and other places named in her honour and you will no longer wonder that she is equipped with medicines and mighty to heal. Therefore in Montpellier, where is the source of the healing art, she works so many cures in her church, that the doctors envying her popularity, are wont to say to the sick and poor who flock to them for healing: " Go to the church of S. Mary, offer a candle to her and you will regain your health." And though they say this in irony, yet the poor who are thus repulsed flee to her and are made whole. Do you not see how swiftly the fever-stricken are cured, when they vow a three weeks' fast till the set of sun?

Novice.—I see and admire.

Monk.—Think of her image in Sardanay which turns into flesh and drips oil continually. Of this, there are countless witnesses, who have come direct from that place and have distributed to us and to other monasteries the oil which has been taken from the sacred image under their own eyes. Indeed in some vessels this oil begins to turn into flesh, as you yourself have seen. That the power of Mary's name puts demons to flight, here are examples.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of a lay-brother who was delivered from the attacks of the devil by the Ave Maria.

Walter of Birbech, a monk of Hemmenrode, told me about a certain lay-brother of our Order whom the devil so persecuted that he could not get rid of him either by the sign of the cross, or by any sort of prayer. He used to appear to him in visible form and terrify him in a thousand ways. At last he was advised, by a certain Religious to utter the angelic salutation against him when he made his next assault. This advice he followed and the evil spirit, driven away as if by a whirlwind, cried out: "May the devil tear out the tongue of him who taught you this"; and so he found deliverance.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Also of a recluse who escaped from the snares of the devil by the same method.

Our sub-prior told me about a certain recluse well-known to him, who had for a long time been mocked by a demon under the form of an angel; for she had not the gift of the discernment of spirits. A demon often appeared to her, surrounded by a sort of false splendour, and talking familiarly with this simple woman, he said one day: "Now I am coming to reward you." It happened at that time that her confessor asked her how she was faring spiritually, and she replied: "I could not be better"; whereupon the priest being a prudent man and considering how confident was her answer, enquired the cause of her confidence. When she confessed to him that she was frequently visited by the angel

of the Lord, he, knowing from the teaching of the apostle, that the angel of darkness is able to transform himself into an angel of light, replied: "Next time this angel visits you, say to him: 'I beg you Sir to show me Our Lady.' And if he agrees, as soon as you see her, kneel down and say: *Hail Mary, full of grace,* etc. And if after this salutation she be still there, then it is no pretence; but if otherwise, you will know that the devil is mocking you."

Now when she had done as she had been instructed, the devil said: "Why do you wish to see her? my presence ought to be enough for you." But as she still vehemently insisted, he used his diabolic art to cause a maiden of wonderful beauty to appear before her. As soon as she saw this appearance, the recluse threw herself at her feet and uttered the angelic salutation to her, which caused her at once to disappear in a mist. But the enemy of souls, as he disappeared, so terrified the recluse that she was driven mad, and only after six months did she recover her senses in response to the prayers of many friends. Do you see now the power of the name of Mary?

Novice.—Indeed I do, and I marvel when I think of her might, as shown both in this and the former examples.

Monk.—The invocation of her name not only puts to shame the corrupters of the mind i.e. demons, but also the corrupters of bodies, I mean, wicked and licentious men.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Also of a matron who by the same angelic salutation was delivered from an attack on her purity.

A certain matron the wife of an honourable knight, tempted by the devil, gave an interview to another knight. But after some time, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, she was seized with penitence for her crime and forthwith

refused any further consent to the adulterer. He, however, noticing the absence of her husband, came to the house and found her alone, and with the usual words urged her to the usual crime ; and when she still refused, he tried to gain his object by force. And when she perceived, that as a weak and delicate woman she could not resist a powerful soldier, she turned her heart to the patroness of all chastity, crying : " I beseech thee Lady to deliver me in this hour, in the name of the sacred *Ave Maria*." When she uttered this word, all the strength of the knight withered and failed and the woman was able to shake him off and escape unharmed. Afterwards the knight asked her by what means she had deprived him of all his strength and she answered : " Not by any strength of my own, but by the might of the glorious name of Our Lady." Now when he heard this, he was truly terrified and never again dared to speak an evil word to her.

Novice.—Blessed be the name of Mary.

Monk.—I will show you by an illustration how chains are loosed through her power.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of the knight Theodoric whose chains were loosed by the merits of S. Mary.

At the time when Dom Engilbert, archbishop of Cologne, was building his castle in Furstinburg against the noble, Gerard of Brubach, a certain young knight of his army, called Theodoric, in his eagerness to make a name for himself was captured before this castle. He was imprisoned there for a long time, until he engaged to pay a ransom for his liberty, when he was taken out of the prison and confined in the upper part of a house.

Chains were laid upon him and guards assigned to him.

They placed iron rings round his feet, and round his arm an iron manacle which was connected with a chain the end of which was very carefully embedded in the wall. One night when he lay down to rest with six guards watching him and the other captives, he invoked Our Lady, as well as other saints, according to his custom and fell asleep. And lo ! in his dream he thought he saw himself transported to our monastery and when he wished to leave, sitting on his horse like a woman, owing to his chains, two of our monks, Manegold and Henry, blood-relations of his, said to him : " Do not leave us, but come back again since it is S. Mary of Heisterbach who has set you free." This indeed was the name of our monastery.

At this word he awoke full of joy ; and pondering upon the vision and eager to know whether it was true or merely fanciful, he made a movement with his foot and found at once that he could draw out one foot without any difficulty. And then with the same ease, he freed his hand from the chair, though he had often tried both before without any success. At the sound of the movement of the chains, one of the guards awoke and the knight, in alarm, tried to replace the iron circlet and failed. Realising then for the first time how marvellous a miracle had been wrought for him by the merits of the Mother of God, as soon as the guard dropped asleep again, he got up quietly and still keeping his chains on one foot, let himself down through the window by his sheets and fled.

As soon as the guards discovered his escape they gave notice of it with loud cries ; but it was not possible for mere human strength to capture one who was protected by divine power. Great numbers pursued him with trumpets and dogs and often they passed close to him, as he lay hid among the bushes, but they could not find him. And so he came to us and in gratitude, made an offering of those iron rings upon the altar of the Blessed Virgin, and told us the whole story of how he had been delivered by her merits.

All this took place in the year of grace 1219.

Novice.—I myself have seen the chains and can therefore the more easily believe the miracle.

Monk.—How the name of Mary can dispel all fear, I will show you in a story which I lately heard.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of a priest of Polch to whom S. Mary appeared that she might take away his fear of a thunder-storm.

In Polch, a town in the diocese of Trèves, the vicar was a certain priest who was a man of great hospitality according to his ability and of praise-worthy chastity ; for to this day he is virgin of his body. One day he received a lay-brother of ours as his guest and said to him : " I have a great affection for your Order, because I have received much good from it. It was from you that I learnt that glorious antiphon : *Salve regina misericordie,* and I will tell you for your edification how that antiphon helped me. I had been accustomed to use it at all my Hours. One day I was crossing a small field to visit a certain recluse who lived close to a solitary church when there arose such a violent thunderstorm that peal succeeding peal took away from me even the power of movement. When at last I came with great toil and fear to the church, I went in, prostrated myself before the altar and prayed to Our Lady with regard to that storm. And lo ! a matron, of innocent countenance and marvellous beauty, came to me from the altar and while I was wondering who she could be, she spoke to me in the following words : "Because you chant so willingly and so frequently the antiphon, *Salve regina misericordie,* never shall thunder or lightning harm you although you have often suffered from fear of them in the past." And so, returning to the altar, she disappeared from my sight ; and forthwith I realised that she was that merciful, pitiful and gentle Mary herself. From that hour up to this day, I have been delivered, by the merits of the

Blessed Virgin, from the aforesaid fear of storms, with which I used to be much oppressed.

Novice.—From this vision I gather how greatly she delights in sequences, canticles and hymns and other chants composed in her honour.

Monk.—This is undoubted, provided that the praise be uttered humbly and devotedly.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of the blessed Elizabeth of Schönau, who at that verse: Hear us, etc., saw S. Mary kneeling before Christ and praying for the convent.

Once as I was told by religious folk, when the convent of nuns in Schönau was chanting with deep devotion the Sequence: *Hail glorious Star of the sea,* on a certain feast of the Holy Mother of God, the venerable virgin Elizabeth, who was then abbess, falling into an ecstasy at that verse: *Hear us, for Thy Son honours thee in denying thee nothing,* saw Our Lady on bended knees, pouring forth prayers for that convent. And from that day until now, by order of the said Elizabeth, this same convent has been wont to seek for mercy at that same verse whenever the Sequence is chanted.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Also of a clerk in whose mouth S. Mary placed bread at the verse: Virgin, pray for us.

In the monastery of S. Chrysanthus, there was a scholasticus named Daniel who taught the boys there. It was his habit

to go every day into the crypt of the church, and kneeling before the altar, to chant the aforesaid Sequence in honour of the Virgin ; when he had done this for some time, and used always to rise and entreat for pardon at the verse: *Virgin, pray for us that we may be made worthy of that bread of heaven,* one day the Blessed Virgin appeared to him ; she stood above the altar, and holding in her hand a small piece of bread whiter than snow, bade him open his mouth. And when she had placed this bread in his mouth, he savoured from it so much sweetness as far surpassed all honey and the honey-comb. This youth was well-known to Dom Daniel, the abbot of Schönau who told me this vision.

Would you like now to hear how the invocation of her name can also restrain temptation?

Novice.—This is indeed all important to know, seeing that we are perpetually harassed by temptations.

Monk.—I will tell you what I have heard from our abbot who himself testifies that he heard this story from a trustworthy witness.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of a knight who was tempted on account of his master's wife and was delivered by S. Mary with a kiss.

A certain young knight lived with a rich knight, his master, by whom he was very kindly treated ; and although he was in the flower of his youth, he flourished even more in the virtue of his virginity. But the envy of the devil working in him, he began to be most grievously tempted towards the wife of his master. Now after labouring incessantly under this temptation for a year, it became unbearable to him, and at last putting away all modesty, he told his mistress how he suffered ; and he was still more afflicted when she repulsed him, for she was an honourable matron

and faithful to her husband. So he went to a certain hermit on whose advice he wholly depended, and with tears, confessed his passion to him. The holy man replied faithfully to him: "O! if that is all that troubles you, I will give you such advice that your desire may be accomplished." For the coming year, go every day when possible to the church and salute 100 times with the angelic salutation and as many prayers for pardon, Our Lady the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, and through her you will obtain all that you wish." For well he knew that the queen of chastity would never forsake a chaste youth, though he had fallen into error. And when the youth in much simplicity was paying the enjoined reverence to Our Lady, one day when sitting at his lord's table, he remembered that that very day was the end of the year. Immediately he got up, mounted his horse and, entering the neighbouring church made his usual prayers. When he went out of the church, he saw a most beautiful maiden, surpassing loveliness all human beauty, holding his horse by the bridle; and while he was wondering who she could be, she said: "Does my appearance please you?" and when the knight replied: "I have never seen anyone half so beautiful as you," she added: "Would you be satisfied to have me for a bride?" And when he replied to her: "Your beauty might satisfy any king in the world, and he would be judged a happy man as your consort"; she went on: "I will be your wife. Come and give me a kiss." And she constrained him and said: "Now are our nuptials begun, and on such and such a day they shall be completed in the presence of my Son." From these words he realised that she was the Mother of the Lord whose chastity delights in human purity. And holding his horse's stirrup, she ordered him to mount and the knight, constrained by her authority, obeyed. From that moment he was so completely delivered from the aforesaid temptation that even his master's wife was astonished.

When he told all these things to the hermit, the latter, wondering both at the goodness and the humility of the Mother of God, replied: "I wish to be present on the day of your nuptials. Meanwhile set all your affairs in order."

This he did and on the appointed day the hermit came and said to the youth: "Do you feel any pain?" He replied, "No," and again an hour later he asked him exactly the same question and the youth answered: "Yes, now I begin to feel it," and a little while after he fell into his agony, breathed out his soul, and entered the heavenly mansions to celebrate his promised nuptials.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Also of a nun who was inflamed with love for a certain clerk, and whom the Blessed Virgin cured by a box on the ears.

A certain nun was urged by a clerk with licentious words and *Behemoth whose breath can set coals on fire* (Job. xli. 12) blew so violently, that she was inflamed and consented both in heart and in words to his petition, promising that after compline she would meet him at an appointed place; for she was the caretaker of the church. When compline was over and the sisters had all gone to the dormitory, she also tried to leave the church, but at the door she saw Christ, hanging with outstretched arms upon the cross. Since it was impossible to go out that way, she ran to the opposite door; for she was so inflamed with love for the clerk, that she was almost out of her mind and scarcely took any notice of the divine agencies that were hindering her. To make a long story short, she tried every door and found the crucified at each.

Then for the first time she came to herself and said within her heart in terror: "Perhaps it is not the will of God that you should go anywhere." Now this virgin had been accustomed every day to say a special prayer concerning the passion of the Lord, and this perhaps is why the Lord rewarded her in the crisis of her peril with so invaluable a vision. Then greatly trembling she threw herself before the

image of the Blessed Mother of God and besought pardon for her sin. But the image turned away her face from her, and when, in the eagerness of her supplication she approached nearer, the image smote her on the jaw with her hand and said: "Whither O mad woman, dost thou desire to go; go to thine own dormitory." So violent was the blow that she fell to the ground and lay there till the morning; and when the bells were rung for matins in the dormitory, and there was no answering bell from the church, her sisters thought that she must be at prayer, or else overcome by sleep, and they hurried to the church and found her in a deep swoon; and as soon as she had been restored and was able to speak, she told them to the honour of God, all that had happened to her.

Although the blow was grievous, nevertheless she was delivered by it from all temptation, for a grievous disease requires harsh medicines.

Novice.—The male sex ought indeed to be kindled with love for Our Lady, seeing that she put away the temptation of the knight by kissing him; and that of the nun by smiting her in the face, though the will of both was equally evil and perverse.

Monk.—For by this she shows, not only that she does not abhor our sex, but also that she cares equally for women. In truth it seems more fitting that a mistress should chastise her erring maid-servant rather than a serving man.

Novice.—I like your explanation.

Monk.—I will tell you another story of her kindness which is still more glorious than this.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Also about Beatrice the custodian.

In a certain convent of nuns, whose name I do not know, there lived a few years ago, a virgin named Beatrice. She

was comely in form, devoted in heart and especially fervent in her worship of the Mother of God. She esteemed it her greatest happiness to offer to her secretly special prayers or appeals for pardon, as often as she could. When she was made custodian of the church, she carried out her duties with the most willing devotion. Now a certain clerk saw her and fell in love with her and began to woo her. When she despised his licentious words and he importuned her all the more, at last the ancient serpent so vehemently inflamed her breast that she was unable to resist the flame of love. And so she went to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, the patroness of the church and spoke as follows: "Lady, I have served thee as devotedly as I could, and lo! now I give thee back thy keys, for I can no longer endure the temptations of the flesh." And laying down the keys upon the altar, she secretly followed the clerk. Now when this miserable wretch had ruined her, after a few days he abandoned her. And since she had no means of support, and was ashamed to return to the convent, she gave herself up to a life of shame. After she had passed fifteen years publicly in this vicious life, she came one day in secular dress to the door of the convent, and said to the porter: "Do you know Beatrice who was once the custodian of this church?" And he replied: "I know her very well, for she is an honourable and saintly lady, and has passed her life in this convent without reproach from her infancy up to this day." She took notice of the man's words, but did not understand them and was about to withdraw when the Mother of Mercy appeared to her in her well-known form and said: "For all the fifteen years of your absence, I have fulfilled your duties; come back now to your place and do penance, for none knows of your sin." And truly the Mother of God had carried out the duties of her office in her form and dress. Immediately she entered the convent and spent the rest of her life in gratitude, making clear by confession all that had been done for her.

That the timid are strengthened by her, the following example will show.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of a knight who failed in his vigils, but was ſtrengthened by S. Mary in a vision.

A few years ago a young knight of luxurious habits called Henry took the vows in Hemmenrode. He became a monk and one day he was asked by one of his former comrades, how he liked the Order and how he was faring. And he replied: "I greatly love the Order and am very happy; but at firſt I was very unhappy," and when the other asked the reason, because he loved the man and wished to edify him, he went on: "When I firſt became a monk, the solemn vigils were such a trouble to me that whenever it was my duty to go to matins both my heart and my body failed through fear and weariness of them. One night I fainted and as I could not ſtand up, I was taken out of the chancel by the prior and placed in the ſtall assigned to the sick and a lay-brother was appointed to look after me. Immediately I fell into an ecſtasy and saw a moſt glorious lady preceded by persons of different ranks walking down the passage which lay between me and the choir. She had on her head a garland of divers colours and wore a Jewish veil and when she drew near to me, touching me as if unavoidably, she brushed me with her robe and lo! I was suddenly ſtrengthened, in such a way that all the aforesaid temptation passed away, and from that hour it became my chief delight to go to matins. I believe that the lady was the Blessed Virgin, who ever ſtrengthens the timid that they may not succumb to temptation. When I asked Henry of the truth of these matters, he assented. How she arouses the sluggish to devotion, you have had an example in the 30th chapter of the 4th book, in the case of our fellow monk Chriſtian, whom she aroused, when he was sleeping in the church, with the words: "This is not the place for sleep but for prayer."

Novice.—I well remember the chapter you speak of.

Monk.—The following ſtory will show how even those who have been ejected from the Order because of their vices may be reſtored by the pity of the Blessed Virgin.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the monk Henry who was ejected and afterwards taken back by the merits of the Blessed Mary.

At the time when the monk Daniel, that simple and upright soul fell into his last sickness in Hemmenrode, there was in the same house, another monk named Henry, a priest, who was sick with the dropsy, but he was still able to walk about with difficulty and was not yet confined to his bed. When he drew near to the dying bed, he heard Daniel say these words: "That monk owes much gratitude to the Blessed Virgin." When Henry heard this, he was much astonished and made enquiry what these words could mean. The other replied that it was with the help of Our Lady that he had been received again into our monastery. For on account of certain excesses and wickednesses, this same Henry had been driven out of the house; and being wholly stricken down with grief, he had by day and night with tears and prayers never ceased to call upon the Blessed Virgin that she would grant him a return to his monastery. At the time of the general chapter, he besought the elders through his abbot, but they unanimously refused him, because he had shown himself incorrigible. And when he heard this, in his anger he withdrew from the Blessed Virgin all the devotion which he had been accustomed to render her. But being at length saved from this attitude by penitence, he resumed the worship he had neglected, and bidding farewell to the convent of Schul-Pforte he returned to Hemmenrode, begged for mercy but found none. The abbot who was the only one on his side, persuaded him to go to the archbishop of Trèves, and gain his admission by his help and intervention, which he did with success. It was revealed to the aforesaid Daniel that all these things were done for him by the kindness of the Blessed Mother of God. Would you like now to know how she loves those who love her with sincere affection, how much she honours the beloved, and with what wonderful revelations she blesses them.

Novice.—To hear such things is food and drink to me.

Monk.—What I am about to tell you I learnt from the faithful account of many Religious.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of the wonderful visions of Dom Bertram of Karixtus.

In a certain house of our Order, called Carreto, there lived a few years ago a monk named Bertram, who loved Our Lady, the Holy Mother of God, with such fervent devotion that he could never hear or read without great torture of heart of any one throwing any kind of doubt upon her Assumption in the body. When he had lived for fifteen years in the Order, being now in the prime of life, on the vigil of the Assumption of the Glorious Virgin, he asked the abbot to allow him to go to a neighbouring grange, saying that he could not endure to listen to the sermons of Jerome in the church, or to the sermon in the chapter house, leſt something of what we have juſt mentioned should be said. The abbot, fearing to diſtress the faith of this holy man, and remembering that he was the maſter of that grange consented to his requeſt. Now when he came near the grange the angel of the Lord carried him away in wonderful guise and within a day set him down near a small church close to the caſtle of his brother, a man of noble birth, and so disappeared. But the horse on which he was riding, was, together with his attendant, set down near the grange. Now between the caſtle and the church, there was a river which could not be crossed without a boat. While he was sitting there, wondering where he could be, and how he had come to that place, he saw a certain splendid youth come out of the church, who cried to him in a loud voice that Our Lady desired him to come immediately into the church. Having entered, he saw

the Holy Mother of God in her glorified body, sitting upon a throne of wonderful beauty and round her were sitting divers orders of saints, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, widows, and married folk. It was at that time the ninth hour ; and the most Blessed Virgin saluted him in familiar fashion, saying : " Bertram, in this place you shall hear better sermons than those of Jerome." Nones were then said by those who were sitting round, and then after due intervals there followed the other Hours, namely vespers, compline, matins, lauds, prime, terce, and sext. And the melody of the psalms and the other chants was so sweet, and the harmony of the voices so marvellous, as no speech can possibly describe. Then turning to him a face full of joy she thus addressed him in a sweet and cheerful voice : " I know well, Bertram, why you have at this time left your monastery. Know for certain that I am glorified in both substances, i.e. in body and soul, and that on the fortieth day, I rose again from the dead."

Novice.—This agrees with the vision of the lady Elizabeth of Schönau, in which we are told that Our Lady revealed her resurrection in the same words.

Monk.—All the more faith should be given to this vision. As soon as the Blessed Virgin had uttered the aforesaid words, the whole of that heavenly band vanished, and the monk found himself again alone in the place where he had been sitting. By the will of God, his brother, whom we spoke of above, came to the spot and finding him sitting there alone asked him whence he had come, and why he was thus sitting there by himself, and the monk told him in order all that had been done to him, that he might not scandalise a layman. Then the other said : " Wait here, brother, and I will go and fetch you a horse." Then a wonderful thing happened ; for while his brother was hastening to the castle, in a moment of time the monk was restored to the place from which he had been taken by the angel of the Lord. When the knight returned, and did not find him whom he had left there, thinking that he must be either an apostate or an outcast, he made all haste to the monastery ; and arriving there just after compline, he asked for the abbot and enquired where his

brother was. The abbot made a sign to him that he must wait until the morning, and the knight, greatly troubled, said: "I know that you have cast him out"; and began to utter threats against the monastery. Whereupon the abbot broke silence and said: "I gave him leave to ride over to the nearest grange and I do not doubt that he is there." They rode there together, and found the monk praying in the chapel of the lay-brethren, who told them that he had entered the grange at the same hour at which the knight had left him near the castle.

Novice.—From what you have told me, I think this man was like the two ancient prophets Ezekiel and Habakkuk one of whom saw miraculously what was being done in Jerusalem, while the other, in a moment of time, was carried from Judaea to Babylon.

Monk.—I consider that what is told of this monk is a still greater thing, for surely to be able to see a glorified body, or the heavenly Orders with the bodily eye is more wonderful than to see them in the spirit, as Ezekiel testified in regard to his vision.

Novice.—I agree.

Monk.—I think that the vision which follows is even greater; one day the angel of the Lord made a sign to him, on the authority of the abbot, that he should come to the gate; he obeyed, and followed the angel who went before him and when he reached the gate, did not find the abbot, but was drawn on into the fields by the same sign. While he was wondering whither he was to go, the angel kept making importunate signs, on the part of the abbot, to the monk as he followed. At length they came to some lofty mountains, and when they had crossed these, they entered upon a most beautiful country, very delightful with trees and flowers of every kind, which indeed was the earthly paradise. Amongst other things that he saw there he recognised two splendid old men, Enoch and Elijah, and they held in their hands an enormous book, written in letters of gold, with only one leaf left blank; and the angel of the Lord said to him: "This is the book of life, which contains all the names of the elect who have been born from the beginning of the world up to

this day. And when that leaf which you see blank shall be filled in, the world will come to an end." Then he showed him his own name written therein. And when with great gladness he had seen it, the angel added: "Never shall your name be blotted out from this book." (Ps. cxxxviv. 16, Luke x. 20).

Novice.—If only the names of the elect are written in that book, what is it that the prophet says about the reprobate (Ps. lxix. 29).

Monk.—The psalmist is speaking there of the hope of those who think that their names are written there, because they presume to think themselves upright. But that none of the reprobate are written there, he shows immediately afterwards.

Novice.—I thank you for the explanation; but I beg that if you know anything further about this blessed saint, you will not hesitate to tell me.

Monk.—Once when he was at prayer in the garden, he saw standing opposite to him upon the green grass, the Blessed Mother of God, and behold! a fountain of a golden colour burst impetuously from where she stood, and sent its rivulet to her feet. And in it there were all manner of precious stones: emeralds, carbuncles, topazes, sapphires, jacinths. And while he wondered at the vision, Our Lady said to him: "Do you know, Bertram, what these things signify?" and when he answered: "No Lady," she said: "This golden fountain is the Cistercian Order which excels all other Orders in the church both in dignity and holiness, just as gold excels all other metals; and as they flow chiefly from me, this Order, by special prerogative of love, does not cease to flow back to me. The precious stones which you see in the stream are my special friends in the Order, and those who are most fervent beyond all others in my service." And so the vision disappeared from his sight. All these things were repeated to the abbots at the time of the general chapter. Many other things did this blessed saint see and do which are well worthy of telling, but they have not come to my ears.

Novice.—I wonder if so holy a man suffered from any temptations in the Order.

Monk.—At the beginning of his conversion, I have heard

that he was very sorely tried by the regular food, as a man of noble birth and delicately nurtured. Now when he told this to the abbot, he, understanding from the purity of his conscience that the Holy Spirit was in him, replied: "Ask God what you will, he will not deny you"; and so he prayed, and his prayer was heard; for from that time he found so much delight in the regular food, that he begged the abbot for permission to exercise greater abstinence.

Novice.—Happy are those monks who are admitted to such close friendship with the Mother of God.

Monk.—It is not only cloistered persons that the Mother of Holy love delights in and honours, but even secular persons who love her, of whom Walter Birbech of blessed memory occurs at once to my mind; of whom I have already spoken in several places and who was loved and honoured, not only by men of low degree, but by kings and princes and nobles when they heard of the benefits bestowed upon him by the Mother of the Lord.

Novice.—I have learnt, from former chapters, something of this man; but still I long to know who he was, what sort of a life he led before his conversion, and whether he took the vows in our Order.

Monk.—All that I know of his acts that are worthy to be recorded, I will expound to you faithfully.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The life of Dom Walter of Birbech.

Walter of Birbech was born in the town of that name, a man both rich and powerful and of very noble birth, being a close relation of Henry, duke of Louvain.

In his youth he was occupied in secular warfare, and was very strenuous therein and of high repute; from his earliest boyhood, he began to call upon Our Lady, the Holy Mother

of God, Mary ever virgin and to love her from the bottom of his heart and to honour her with fasting and alms and masses, for although he was given up in body to tournaments, as we have said, yet inwardly he was a whole-hearted worshipper of the Blessed Virgin. Once when he was on his way to a certain tournament, travelling in the company of many other knights they came to a church and he besought them to come in with him and hear mass. And when they refused, excusing themselves on the ground that so great a delay was dangerous, he himself stayed behind while they went on, and caused a mass, the mass of S. Mary to be sung for him, and made his offering ; and then went after his companions. And when he met some returning from the tournament, and discovered this fact from their reply to his questions, he asked : " Has it already began? " and when they said " Yes," he said : " Who is doing best there? " The lord Walter of Birbech " they said ; " it is he who is in everybody's mouth, he who is preferred to all the rest and is praised by all." And when others met him and said the same thing, he was bewildered and wondered what this might mean. The ineffable goodness of the Blessed Virgin had caused her devoted knight to be honoured in the tournament because he had spent the time of his delay in her worship, and she had filled his place during his absence with marvellous might. Yet, when he came to the place and put on his armour and entered the lists, he had no great success there. But after the games were over, several knights came into his lodging and prayed that he would deign to deal mildly with them ; and when he said to them : " I do not understand your petition " ; they replied : " You have to-day taken us prisoners, and we have come to ask you to treat us well." When Walter denied, and said : " I did not take you prisoners " ; they replied : " In very truth we have surrendered to you this day ; we could not mistake your military banner nor your voice." And we knew forthwith that this had been done by the grace of the Blessed Virgin whom he had honoured in the mass.

Novice.—Seeing that it is a mortal sin to take part in a tournament, how could the prayer and offering of Walter be pleasing to the Blessed Virgin?

Monk.—In tournaments two mortal sins are committed, pride and disobedience. Pride because the whole object of a tournament is human praise ; disobedience because it takes place against the prohibition of the church. That is why those who are killed in tournaments are buried outside the cemeteries of the faithful, whereas the worship paid in that mass might have gained him merit for eternal life, if it had been given in a state of grace, it now became changed to a temporal reward. For good deeds, that is deeds classed as good, are rewarded in this life. Through them too, as some have shown from the scriptures, a man makes himself able to receive grace. That this is true is shown by the following example. When at another time he was on his way to that accursed market, and was standing among many other knights listening to the mass ; the priest, when he uplifted the chalice in the canon, saw lying at his feet a golden cross ; to which was attached a parchment containing these words : " Give this cross from me, Mary, the Mother of Christ, to my friend Walter of Birbech." The priest read these words, and when the mass was finished, he mounted the pulpit and said aloud : " Is there here any knight called Walter of Birbech." When several made reply : " Yes, here he is " ; the priest took him aside and gave him the cross, and told him where he had found it and who had sent it. Walter received it with great joy and when he made his profession in Hemmenrode gave it to the abbot. Later, the countess of Holland, sending honourable messengers, besought that the cross might be given her and obtained it in the following way. For when the convent gave answer to the messengers : " We cannot give it up without the consent of brother Walter," hoping that he would never give his consent, he, when asked about this, replied : " I have no claim to it, it belongs to the abbot." And so, though greatly grieving, they sent it away.

Its gold was of such splendour that all other gold seemed pale beside it. The countess placed it among her relics, not daring to use it. Walter, considering how he had hitherto been a layman, and how many benefits he had received from the Blessed Mother of God, was so inflamed with love towards her that he went to a certain poor church dedicated in her

honour, and in the presence of the priest, having placed a rope about his neck, he offered himself at her altar as a slave of the soil, paying every year a ransom for his life, in the same way as those born slaves were accustomed to do.

And because he so deeply humbled himself in honour of the queen of heaven, she in her turn gave glory to her beloved. He was accustomed on the eve of all the feasts of the Blessed Virgin to fast on bread and water, and frequently also on Fridays in reverence of the Sabbath. One day when he was fasting, a servant offered him a little pitcher of water, which the divine power changed in his hands into the finest wine ; and when he had tasted the water thus made wine, he sent for the servant privately and rebuked him, telling him that he had brought him wine instead of water ; and the other denied saying that he himself had drawn the water from a bucket and took the pitcher and pouring out some of it showed that it was filled with the purest water, and in order that there might be no possible mistake, tasted it and offered it again to Walter. But he, when he had drunk of it, found it wine as before, and immediately said angrily to the servant : " Why do you mock me this second time by offering me wine instead of water? " The servant was bewildered at hearing this and denied it with the most solemn oaths. Then it dawned upon him that this miracle had been wrought on his behalf by the wonderful mercy of the Mother of God, and he adjured his attendant that he should never divulge what had happened to any man so long as he lived ; showing by this that he had no desire for vainglory. Now the attendant who took part in so great a miracle, was brother Arnold who had come to the Order with him, a man of holy and well-ordered life who was afterwards buried on the hill at Stromberg. Before he died, he published this miracle to the glory of God, fearing that after death he might be called to account for the treasure he had kept hidden. When Walter heard that the Cistercian Order was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, for love of her he forsook all worldly advantages, all riches, honours and friends and put on the regular dress in the monastery called Hemmenrode, whose fame was as great in those days as it is now. And in this monastery he passed his life, as

humble as he was fervent and obedient, and all the monks of that convent testify how devoted he was in the worship of the Blessed Virgin. He most diligently repeated the psalter, the hymns, the canticles and very many other prayers about Our Lady which he had learnt as a novice. He was always eager to take part in the daily mass of Our Lady and scarcely ever spoke except for edification. He was made master of the guests, because so many were edified, not only by his words and behaviour, but also by the atmosphere of sanctity which surrounded him. Once there was a man possessed of the devil, who was brought to the monastery in the hope of a cure, and received into the guest house ; he came from the country and was both rich and well known ; and when he could not be cured by any known remedy, neither by the relics of the saints, nor the prayers of the monks, Walter visited him frequently in pursuance of his office, and read over his head prayers and verses written about Our Lady which he had, showed him sacred pictures and by all these things adjured the devil to depart from him. One day when he had placed the psalter upon the head of the possessed man, the demon, crying and raging, so bruised and bewildered the man from whom he was compelled to depart, that he fell to the ground as if dead. An hour later, he came back to himself, crying out that he was delivered from the devil.

All this was told me by a lay-brother who acted as an attendant upon the country-man in his madness. He went back to his home in a sound mind, but after a little while returned to give thanks to the Blessed Virgin and to her servant, his healer, adding in the hearing of the whole convent : " If there were no other objects of veneration in this monastery beyond this holy man, by whose merits I have been healed, that ought to be enough for any convent.

Novice.—These are great things that you tell me.

Monk.—Not only demons, but also brute beasts were obedient to his sanctity.

There was at the monastery a very beautiful colt, of such value that both the bishop of Trèves and the duke of Lorraine offered, I believe, forty marks of silver for it ; for in this colt was the strain of the best kind of charger. Now the convent

feared to offend the other if it sold the colt to either, so they sent Dom Walter, attended by two lay-brethren, to take the horse as a free gift to the count of Holland. When they came to a certain defile, the colt saw a herd of mares feeding in the distance ; and immediately whinnying and gambolling shook itself free from the hands of those who were leading it and galloped off at full speed to join the herd. And when the lay-brethren pursued it, the herd took to flight and the colt only went further and further from them. Finding all their labour fruitless they came back and Walter said to them : " Let us go forward, for that horse is lost unless S. Mary restore him to us."

They had scarcely gone forward for two miles when behold! the colt who had not yet been broken in, galloped back to them and like a gentle sheep submitted his neck to the hands of his leaders.

Now because he was well-known to the nobles of the land, and was held in high respect by them both for his noble blood and also for his holy life, he was often sent out against his own will on the business of the monastery.

Once when going down the Rhine in a ship which was carrying the wine of the monastery, when they reached Zeeland, a very terrible tempest arose and terrified them all and put the ship on her beam ends. Danger was added to danger, for pirates rowed out to them and tried to plunder the ship and behold by the just judgment of God two great tuns cast out of the ship by the violence of the winds capsized the pirate vessel and drowned the pirates themselves in the sea. These things took place on the eve of S. Nicholas after midnight. Each of the crew fearing for his life fell on his knees and prayed to God. But that blessed saint coming out of the ship's cabin took his servant aside and made his confession to him, and then returned to his cabin. Then he placed before himself an ivory image of the Holy Mother of God which he always carried about with him, prostrated himself before it and prayed, and in the midst of his prayer gently fell asleep. And forthwith it seemed to him that he could hear Dom Arnold in Hemmenrode, a saintly man of holy life, singing the psalms at the time ; and he was awakened by the very

sweetness of his voice ; for it was the time of matins. Realising at once that this righteous man was praying for them at this very hour, he went out joyfully and consoled everyone he met with these words, saying : " Have no fear, no ill can touch us, for I have heard Dom Arnold our monk from S. Severin singing psalms on our behalf." Very soon by the divine power and merits of the Blessed Virgin whom he had invoked and by the help of the aforesaid Arnold, the storm was abated. When this story was told to Dom Herman the prior, now the abbot of Marienstadt, forthwith he summoned Dom Arnold who was altogether without knowledge of these things and asked him what he had been meditating upon on the eve of S. Nicholas during matins, or what he was doing at that time, and he replied : " Believe me, I was singing the psalms then." " In what way? " asked the prior. And he : " When I cannot feel devotion, I move my fingers under my cowl in the way of a man who is playing the harp and I touch the cords in imagination and so I rouse the sluggishness of my mind to devotion." And the prior wondered greatly when he heard this. Seeing that he was a learned man, I think he must have done this by the example of Elisha who was roused to the spirit of prophecy by the sound of the lute (II Kings iii. 15). To say nothing about the brethren, so great was his compassion towards the poor that when he learnt about any case he would forestall their requests and give them money out of the sum that had been alloted to him for his expenses. One cold day he met a bare-footed scholar, stopped him, got down from his horse, took off his shoes and gave them to him, and putting on some others which he had in his wallet, remounted his horse and went on. This happened when I myself was present.

He used to reconcile those who were at variance, by reasoning with the disobedient and would often bring the angry and impatient to a better mind, and help the tempted by many examples which he always had ready to hand. Hence it was that when I was talking with him about a certain matter, he drew me aside and said : " I too know what it is to suffer severe temptations of the flesh." That he might be able to help others, he never hesitated to confess to them his own

weaknesses. One day the aforesaid prior told me that he had asked him what he was thinking of at table because he did not seem to be following the lection, and he replied: "At such times I always have my own lection. When I begin to eat, I think of how the Son of God was for my sake foretold by the angel and conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin and so I turn my first page. And then I think how the angels sang round him at his birth and how he was wrapt in swaddling bands and laid in a manger; and there is my second page finished. In this way I pass through His circumcision, the coming of the magi, His presentation in the temple, His baptism, His fasting, His passion, His resurrection, His ascension, the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the last judgment. Such is my daily lection, and when it is ended, my dinner is also done." What he read in such a book during his meal, is shown clearly by the tears which he shed upon the table. For he found more delight in such holy meditations than in genuflexions, by which the spirit of him who meditates is often hindered. He did not so much petition for pardon in his prayers but used to stand or look up to heaven with uplifted countenance while kneeling upon his knees.

Before God called him from this world, a wonderful vision was revealed to him about a certain monk. When he was living in Villers, which is a house of the Cistercian Order whose abbot then was Dom Eustace, one Sunday after supper this abbot caused the whole convent to be called together. And when this was done and the abbot said: "Are all our brethren here now?" the answer was made: "All, Sir, except two younger ones who were sent hither as guests from France, and who are especially zealous about the rule of silence particularly on days when they have communicated." But being sent for a second time by the abbot and upbraided by him for their delay, they excused themselves humbly and sat down among the rest. On the next day when the convent was returning to the monastery after the day's labour and the first bell for none rang before they reached the gate, while the senior monk, waiting for the second bell, was standing and resting upon his spade and was saying the none of Our Lady, as he thus stood he gently fell asleep and behold! he saw the Mother

of God herself, accompanied by personages of different ranks pass between him and the gate in a marvellous blaze of light. And when, as if he was a stranger, to her she neither looked back at him or called him, he said sadly in his heart: "Alas, unhappy man that I am, why does she not call me?" But when she had gone a little way further, she took pity on him and sent back a monk, who was permitted to be near her, saying: "Call that monk to me." And when the other coming back to him, called him and said: "Come, for Our Lady calls you," for very joy he awoke.

Entering the church and looking upon Dom Walter, he said within himself: "That monk is very like the monk by whom Our Lady sent for me in my sleep to-day, except that his cowl was grey while this monk's cowl is white. And he told the vision to his companion. Next day when the lord abbot and Walter were about to depart, and the before-mentioned youths were sent for by them to the gate, and Walter was standing there in his grey cowl, having laid aside the white one which had been lent to him, the monk said to his companion: "In very truth that is the monk who came for me, I recognise his dress and have no doubt of his identity." A few days afterwards, Walter fell sick, and full of faith and charity, having made his confession and in deep contrition, he was summoned by the Blessed Mother of God, and passed from darkness into light, from faith to sight, from toil to rest, from deserving to reward, from the world to his heavenly country. Whither may the Son of God Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, bring us all, for He is the way by example, the truth in His promise and the life for reward. Amen. Further the monk of Villers was himself summoned, as was shown to him beforehand, and after a few days departed to be with the Lord. The aforesaid abbot Eustace told me this story.

Moreover that the Lord might show how precious in His sight was this man, beloved of His Mother, He honoured him with signs and wonders after his death. At that time Winemar of Aldindorp, a rich and honourable knight, was lying upon his bed totally paralysed. When he heard that the man of God, who was dearly beloved by him, had departed to be

with the Lord, he immediately sent a messenger to Hemmenrode, by whom he besought that the shoes of the dead man might be sent to him. New ones were sent to him, and he immediately sent them back because he realised that they had not belonged to Dom Walter. Then by the same messenger some very old boots of the man of God were sent which the sick man received with faith and devotion, and as soon as he laid them upon his hands which were already dead, he felt an extraordinary benefit from them. And the same thing happened with his feet. From that hour he was able to lift his hands and feet and to recover, though gradually, the strength of his whole body. Moreover, he held these shoes in so much veneration as well as the benefit which had been conferred upon him through their means, that he built a chapel in his castle and enclosed the same shoes in a wooden altar in the presence of our abbot. And another knight who had a dangerous tumour in his breast, hearing how great a benefit had been wrought in the case of Winemar by the aforesaid shoes, begged that one of them might be sent to him, and as soon as it touched the place of the ulcer, he was completely healed.

Novice.—I confess that it has been fully proved to me, that the Blessed Mary loves and honours those who love her.

Monk.—Not only does she bring her lovers and beloved to eternal life, but also she frequently advances them even to temporal honours.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Of our abbot to whom S. Mary appeared to give him the pastoral rod before he was promoted to the abbacy.

After the death of our abbot Gevard, the predecessor of our present abbot, there was among us a certain priest of great

age Syfrid by name who had, as we thought, at times the spirit of prophecy. Here a long while before the celebration of the election, he foretold secretly to some that Dom Henry who was then prior, would be our future abbot and that he would be consecrated to the abbacy in the cathedral of Trèves. When asked how he knew this, he replied: "I saw Our Lady offering him the pastoral rod before the presbytery of that church, the church of S. Peter." Nevertheless he was unwilling to tell to anyone the manner of the vision. More words are unnecessary. So unanimously was he chosen to the abbacy that the visitor was astonished, saying that so unanimous an election could not have taken place except by the will of God. And because at that time installations could not take place at Cologne, on account of the captivity of bishop Bruno, the prior granted him leave to receive his ordination at the hands of John, the archbishop of Trèves. It had been made known to us that he would celebrate his solemn ordination at Coblenz, as indeed took place. Our abbot-elect took with him some monks who were to be ordained and set out thither. And I said in my heart: "Surely that good man was partly deceived by some spirit of error." But because things which have been divinely ordered, cannot be changed, after the lord archbishop had ordained the clerks and was greatly fatigued, he said to the abbot: "Lord Abbot, I am very weary: will you come to me at Trèves on Palm Sunday and I will gladly consecrate you there," and this was done; and I was greatly astonished, nor did I henceforth doubt the truth of the vision.

Novice.—What if men should conduct themselves ill in high office when they have been so promoted by the Blessed Virgin?

Monk.—As they are exalted by her pity, so by her justice are they sometimes brought low and this no doubt for their own good.

Novice.—Will you give me an illustration ready to hand?

CHAPTER XL.

Also of the bishop Theodoric, who was promoted by her to be bishop of Cologne and afterwards by her will was set aside.

When the aforesaid Bruno died, and Otto was now confirmed in his kingdom, after Philip had been put to death, the question arose who should succeed Bruno in the bishopric of Cologne. Herman the dean of Bonn who, as you know, is a very learned man, prayed with all his heart to God and His Mother, as I have been told, that a worthy man might be appointed to so high an office and in the night the Blessed Virgin appeared to him in a vision and holding out a book written in golden letters, she said: "Give this book to the bishop." The only writing the book contained was the angelic salutation i.e. *Ave Maria gratia plena*. By the book she signified the episcopate. And when he wished to give the book to John the bishop of Cambrai, because both the king and himself thought well of him, knowing his honesty, the Blessed Virgin called him back saying: "Give it, not to John, but to Theodoric the provost of the church of the holy apostles. Moreover if he does not show himself worthy in his bishopric, as he has obtained it through me, so will he be deprived of it through me. Now this Theodoric had always been a devoted worshipper of the Virgin, and, as you already know, had been eager to take part in a daily mass in her honour, making his offering every day. At the time of the election the king did his best for the bishop of Cambrai, but gave in when the electors told him that he did not know the language of the country. The aforesaid Herman had already mentioned this very thing. Then the electors entrusted their votes to four persons who chose Theodoric as their bishop. But after a very short time he was so led astray by evil advice that he made scarcely any difference between laymen and ecclesiastics, between countrymen and monks, taking toll from both alike and oppressing all with undue exactions. The Mother of God vexed by these and other wrong actions of his caused him,

as might be gathered from the aforesaid vision, to be deposed in great disgrace by the bishop of Mainz, his rival taking his place by election.

Novice.—I have indeed heard that during his bishopric he behaved harshly to our Order.

Monk.—Therefore he was deservedly cast out by her who is the advocate of the Order. So great is her care for the Order that she does not pass over without reproof even those who speak thoughtlessly against it.

CHAPTER XLI.

Of a scholar of Cologne whom S. Mary punished in his dreams, when he had spoken evil of our Order.

At Cologne there is a scholar scarcely fourteen years old, the son of a certain citizen, and canon of the church of S. Mary in the capitol, who loved our Order marvellously. In this year when the ships of the Order did not dare to pass by Zeeland, through fear of pirates, a rumour came to Cologne that they had all been plundered and certain men said: "This has justly befallen them, for the monks are greedy traders and God cannot endure their avarice. The aforesaid lad was so stirred by words of this kind that he conceived a hatred against our Order, spoke ill of religion and could no longer look favourably upon a monk or lay-brother. One night in his sleep he seemed to be standing before the image of the Mother of God, and when she had looked upon him with great severity, and the boy was trembling before her, she turned away her face from him saying: "O boy of evil heart, you are speaking evil of the best friends that I have in the whole world." He, understanding well what she meant, awoke in terror and through the grace of the Virgin Mary rekindled in his heart the love he had lost. Moreover, that the Most Merciful Virgin punishes sometimes and humiliates those who

despise her, I will show you by two examples. I remember that I told you others in a former chapter, about those who seized the possessions of Marienſtatt, whom she brought low and to this day continues to bring low.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of the punishment of Sybodon and his allies, because of an injury done to the Blessed Virgin.

Laſt year two knights who were brothers, officers of the count Palatine of the Rhine, one of whom was named Sybodon and the other Baldemar, took a number of men with them and came with an armed band to the town of Cussele and robbed the market place of everything saleable through their hatred of Waleram, count of Lutzelinburg, carrying off with them much cattle and other booty of different kinds. This day happened to be a day of threefold solemnity, for it was Sunday, it was the feaſt of the nativity of the Holy Mother of God, and the feaſt of the dedication of the church of that town. The night before a soldier who was one of the companions of Sybodon saw this vision. He saw the Blessed Virgin caſting herself at the feet of the Saviour, and saying in a clear voice: "Lord, I make my complaint to Thee of Sybodon and his accomplices because they have diſturbed the dedication of my church and have spoiled those who were flocking to it, and have paid no honour to Thy holy day, nor to that of my own nativity." For because she knew what would happen on that day she counted it as already done. The soldier trembling at the vision told it to Sybodon, but he taking no account of the ſtory told the man that he had been dreaming and compelled him to follow him againſt his will. But the Lord of might who brought Nebuchadnezzar from Chaldea to punish the pride of the Jews, summoned the younger Waleram to avenge the wrong done to His Mother.

For on that same day he entered Cùssele with an armed band unexpectedly about the hour of None. For he had not been there for half a year. Those who had loſt their property making their complaint of Sybodon, when Waleram asked which way he had gone or where he was they replied: "Sir, he is reſting in fancied security in such a place about four miles away." Then he concealing his anger said: "We may not fight to-day, because it is the feaſt of S. Mary." Nevertheless he ordered food to be given to the horses, so that after a short reſt, they might be the bolder for the fight. Before sunset he, with all his men, mounted and went after the enemy, and falling upon them in the dark, when they thought themselves safe, killed some and captured others, so that scarcely anyone escaped except the soldier who had seen the aforesaid vision. When this was over, a certain woman said to Waleram: "Sir, the leaders of those robbers are reſting in such a place." For they had retired a little way from the town to a certain farm and were sleeping there. Immediately they all turned thither and when they had cut down with axes the hedge and the gate, they raised the war cry of Waleram, and this was made known to Sybodon, he in terror tried to flee, but found that he could not rise or move his foot from that place. And when Baldemar said to him: "Get up, brother and let us flee"; he replied: "You go, brother, for I cannot get up; for I feel as it were a lump of lead upon my knees." To which the other replied: "Neither will I flee, for I mean to ſtay with you." And so both were captured and killed and thus paid the penalty for the sacrilege they had wrought againſt the Mother of God.

Novice.—It is very clear that this was a direct punishment, agreeing as it does with the vision, and with the penalty exacted from Wilhelm of Helpinſtein, as was told above in the seventh chapter.

Monk.—Not only for wicked deeds which dishonour His Mother does Chriſt exact punishment, but also for approbrious words.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Of the punishment of a gambler, who blasphemed S. Mary.

We read in the book of the Miracles of Clairvaux a terrible ſtory about two gamblers. When one of them had loſt heavily, in order that he might satisfy his anger and envy of the good fortune of the other, he began to utter foul words againſt God. And his companion inspired by the same evil spirit reſtrained him saying: "Be silent, for you do not know how to curse." And forthwith he began to blaspheme againſt God terribly and when he broke out into insults againſt His Mother, a voice was heard from on high: "Insults againſt Myself I have put up with, but I can by no means tolerate affronts to My Mother." And forthwith as he sat at that table, he was ſtricken invisibly with a visible wound, and frothing at the mouth expired. And why should I speak of opprobrious words when I have known even a foolish speech, though uttered without any gall of malice againſt an image of the Holy Mother of God, grievously punished in this present life.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Also of the punishment of a certain matron of Veldenz, who uttered foolish words concerning the image of S. Mary.

In the chapel of the fort of Veldenz there is a certain ancient image of the Blessed Virgin, holding her Son in her lap, not indeed fashioned with any skill, but endowed with much virtue. A certain matron of that caſtle, which is situated in the diocese of Trèves, was one day ſtanding in the chapel and looking at this image and in scorn for the way it was

sculptured said: "Why does this old rubbish stand here?" But the Blessed Mary who is the Mother of mercy, not, as I think making any accusation to her Son concerning this foolish woman, but predicting a future punishment for her fault said to another matron: "Because that lady," mentioning her name "has called me old rubbish, she will be an unhappy woman all her life." A few days afterwards she was despoiled of all her property and lands by her own son and even to this day begs her bread miserably, paying the penalty for her folly. You see how the Blessed Virgin loves and honours those who love her, and punishes and brings low those who despise her.

Novice.—If those who despise sacred images incur such heavy penalties, I think that those who venerate them must merit great favour.

Monk.—You shall learn this more fully in what follows.

CHAPTER XLV.

Of another matron, who by the help of the same image, recovered her daughter who had been carried off by a wolf.

In the aforesaid fort there lived an honourable and devout matron named Jutta. She it was to whom the Blessed Virgin complained of the opprobious words spoken against her image. And rightly; for she venerated this image with the highest honour, making before it salutations, prayers and many petitions of pardon. Once when she had sent her little daughter into the neighbouring town to be brought up and the child, who was now three years old, was playing in an open space, a wolf was seen by several people to seize her by the throat in her play and throwing her over his back to set out for the woods close at hand. Many ran after him with cries but

returned sadly without having rescued the little girl. One of them ran to the castle and telling the mother, who was sitting at the table, of the carrying off of her daughter said: "Madam, a wolf has eaten your daughter," to whom she very much angered replied: "Of a surety no wolf has eaten my daughter." Nevertheless she immediately rose from the table, and entering the chapel in great bitterness of heart, tore the image of the Saviour from His Mother's lap, and standing opposite her and weeping bitterly she broke out into these words: "Lady, never shall you have your Son back again unless you restore to me my child unhurt." Wonderful humility of the queen of heaven! As if she feared to lose her Son if the woman did not recover her daughter, she forthwith laid her orders upon the wolf who let the girl go. Many from the town were following the tracks of the wolf in order that they might bury the remains of the child, and found her running about near a certain copse. And when they said to her: "Where have you come from, little girl?" she replied: "Mummart has bitten me." For the marks of the wolf's teeth in her throat showed clearly on the surface of the skin, and they are there to this day as a witness of so great a miracle. Then they took the child to her mother, who, as soon as she saw her safe and sound, ran joyfully to make an act of thanksgiving to the sacred image, and putting back the Child into her lap, she said: "Because thou hast given me back my daughter, lo, I restore to thee thy Son." This was told me by Herman the abbot of Marienstatt whom I have so often mentioned and who saw the girl and heard from the mouth of the mother all that I have told. While he was still prior in Hemmenrode and had the firm intention of resigning his office, the aforesaid matron besought his abbot Dom Eustace, to whom she was giving hospitality to send him to visit her, to which request Dom Eustace consented. When he came the lady took him into the presence of the image of the Mother of God and warned him not to resign his office. It is not pleasing to God she said that you should resign. And when he asked her how she knew this, she replied: "It has been revealed to me by Our Lady here," pointing to the image with her finger.

Many revelations indeed were made through that sacred image to this devoted woman, and very many were the benefits that were granted to her through it.

Novice.—Hitherto I have had no idea that such great benefits were to be found in the images of the saints.

Monk.—The saints work many wonders in and through their images, especially in those places where they are held in veneration. Do you not remember the story of the young apostate near Floreffe who obtained pardon through the image of the Blessed Virgin ; and also, of the nun who received a blow on the head from her image and so escaped a dangerous temptation?

Novice.—I remember both very well, for the first of these miracles was in the twelfth chapter of the second book and the second in the thirty-third chapter of the present book ; and bewilderment overwhelms me when I hear that in wood there can be a voice to speak, a hand to strike and a body which can bend itself, raise itself, and sit down, and perform all other functions of life. This astonishes me far more than the speech of Balaam's ass. For it indeed had life in it which could move ; but there is no breath of life in wood, or stone, or metal.

Monk.—The Spirit of God exists in every creature, both in essence and in power, and to Him nothing is impossible nor miraculous, and he daily works such things as these in honour of his saints. But concerning the image of the Blessed Virgin, I will tell you a very marvellous vision which took place three years ago.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Of the image of S. Mary in Essen.

On the boundaries of Friesland near the city of Gröningen there stands a certain convent of nuns of our Order, lately built and called Essen.

What I am about to tell you I heard from the prior of that convent and about the same time I saw the image itself and celebrated mass before it. It was well sculptured by angelic hands and represented the Blessed Virgin holding her Son in her lap. One day, after mass, when the nun who was in charge of the church, had extinguished the candle which was burning before the image, two carpenters who went into the church to do some work, found it relighted and they said to the prior: "Sir, unless you warn the custodian to be more careful in extinguishing this candle, you will lose your church." For it was all made of wood, altar, candlestick and walls alike. The custodian was sent for and upbraided, she denied any carelessness and put out the candle. The carpenters coming in again, saw that the aforesaid candle was alight again and as soon as they had informed the prior, he was very angry and upbraided the custodian very harshly. But being assured by her words that she had really put out the candle, he ordered her not to put it out again because he wished to find out what this might mean. For the whole of that day and the following night, the aforesaid candle burnt before the image, and yet in the morning it had been scarcely consumed to the length of half a finger joint. On the feast of the blessed Andrew the apostle, when one of the aforesaid carpenters, a man simple-minded and devout, who had lately become a lay-brother in that convent, was standing at the mass, and the priest was beginning to read the gospel, he saw the image of the Saviour rise up from His Mother's lap on which he was sitting, take the crown from her head and place it on His own. But when the gospel was over and they had come to that place in the creed: *and was made man,* he restored the crown to His Mother's head and sat down again. When this simple-minded man saw this and was astounded at the novelty of the vision, he said to himself: "It is better to remain silent, for if I speak, I shall not be believed." But when on the feast of S. Nicholas he saw again exactly the same vision, he feared to incur divine wrath if he should remain silent and so he told the prior all that he had seen, and because, being a layman, he could not explain the exact place where the crown was put back, when he was asked about

it, he replied: "When the name of Mary was mentioned." Immediately it occurred to the prior that on the feast day of a confessor the church was not accustomed to say the Nicene creed. And calling his companion he said: "Did you say mass in the convent on S. Nicholas' day?" For he himself had been away from home on that day. And when the other replied: "Yes" he went on: "Did you say the Nicene creed?" "Yes I did" he said and the prior: "You did not do rightly, for he was not an apostle." To which the other replied: "Assuredly, I hold S. Nicholas the equal of many of the apostles." And thus the prior was assured that the vision was true.

Novice.—Will you explain to me the mystery of this vision?

Monk.—The royal diadem seems in this place to signify the glorious flesh of the Virgin which came to her from royal ancestors. But Christ placed His Mother's crown upon his own head when by the sacrament of the incarnation, he united flesh taken from the Virgin to His own divinity. Whence the Holy Spirit calling us to the consideration of so great a mystery says, in the song of songs: *Go forth, O ye daughters of Jerusalem and behold king Solomon,* i.e. Christ the true prince of peace *with the crown,* i.e. in human flesh, *with which his Mother crowned Him,* that is the Virgin Mary *in the day of her espousals* (Cant. iii. 11), when at the annunciation the heavenly nuptials were celebrated in her womb between the divine and human nature. But by the fact that at the words: *and was made man,* He restored the crown to His Mother's head, He seemed to say: "Mother, as I, through you, am made partaker of human substance, so you through me are made partaker of the divine nature. For we are the body and the members of Christ, who is both God and man. Let these things be said for the consolation of the elect through her sacred image.

Hear now another kind of consolation about what I said in the beginning of this book, namely that there are with her comforting medicines.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Of a medicinal monk to whom S. Mary at first refused her electuary in the church and afterwards gave it to him when he had amended his life.

There was in our Order a certain doctor, a monk rather in dress than in fact, who travelled over the provinces at the call of the sick and scarcely ever returned to the monastery except on the principal festivals.

On a certain feast of the Holy Mother of God when at night he was standing with the others to sing the psalms, he saw the most Blessed Virgin herself, surrounded by a great light, enter the choir and go round the singers. With a spoon she drew out some electuary from a box which she carried in her hand and placed it in the mouth of each. But when she came to him, she passed by him and said: "You have no need of my electuary because you are a doctor and provide many medicines for yourself"; he, in much sadness, followed her with his eyes as she went by and realised his fault. For from that time he never left the monastery unless compelled by obedience to the abbot; and put away from him all bodily comforts. On the next feast day of Our Lady, she visited her servants as before, and when she came to the doctor, she stopped and said: "Because you have amended your ways and have preferred my medicines to your own, behold I give you a share of my electuary, as I do the rest." And when he had tasted of it, he immediately experienced so much sweetness of devotion that forthwith he remained a faithful member of the community and *counted as dung* all fleshly comforts (Phil. iii. 8).

That electuary is to be understood as the grace of devotion by whose virtue worshippers are strengthened, and by whose sweetness the toil of vigils is changed into delight. The components of this medicine are the heartfelt memories of the Lord's incarnation of His nativity, and of all the other sacraments of Christ, all of which are flavoured with the

honeysweet hope of future reward and by the merits of the Blessed Virgin are shed upon all worshippers.

Novice.—What you say is pleasing to hear.

Monk.—That the ointments of the Blessed Mother of God are health-giving, the spouse bears witness in the Canticles (Cant. iv. 10) and in Ecclus. xxiv. 15. Of how great virtue and grace are these same unguents, the following example will declare.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Of a nun, whose injured leg was anointed and healed by S. Mary in a vision.

A very delightful thing happened a few years ago in a certain monastery of nuns of our Order which I know very well. There is there a sister, also known to me, of praiseworthy life and very fervent in her worship of the Blessed Virgin. Once when she was making a genuflexion, impelled by too much fervour, she injured her knee or shin-bone, and was asleep in the infirmary at mid-day, when the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in her sleep, standing by her, carrying a box of ointment in her hand ; and putting in her fingers, she took some of this ointment and with it anointed the injured leg of the nun. Immediately the air was filled with so strong an odour that the sisters who were sleeping near aroused by that odour got up and coming to her bed because the strength of the odour seemed greater there, awoke the sleeper. When they asked her by signs what was or whence came so strong an odour, she, fully aware of the cause, but indeed made all the more sure of the truth of the vision by these very signs, was unwilling to tell them or to make any signs in response, only nodding to them that they should go to sleep. And when she again fell asleep, the Mother of the Lord came a second time, and in a vision took her with her

into the orchard of the convent ; and placing her hand under her chin she said : " Kneel down." And when she had done this, Our Lady added : " For the future you ought to seek pardon in this modest and submissive way," giving her instructions. And then she added : " You ought to say to me every day the sequence, *Hail Mother of God,* and at every verse to pray for pardon. For in this I take much pleasure." Then the nun awoke, and that one might find out whether there was any result from the vision she examined her knee and was filled with wonder to find it entirely healed.

Novice.—I conjecture from this vision how little the Blessed Virgin cares for indiscreet fervour in prayer or for undisciplined movements in genuflections.

Monk.—I agree with you. For to say nothing of the person of the Blessed Mother of God I will show you how her name is sweeter than honey, not by mere words but in living example.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Of a recluse who, through the Ave Maria, experienced a wonderful sweetness.

Near the church of Severin in Cologne there lived a certain anchorite, Marsilius by name, who had formerly been bishop at S. Sebastian in Tuscany, and who had been deposed by Alexander at the time of the schism which took place between Alexander and Paschal. The matrons of the city used to go to him and one of them had confessed to him that she could never say the name of Our Lady without experiencing a wonderful sweetness, and when asked if she knew the reason of such grace, she replied : " Every day I have been wont to say fifty Ave Marias in her honour, with as many prayers for pardon, and this is why I have gained such sweetness that while I am praying, all the saliva in my

mouth seems changed into honey. Now when the said recluse heard this, following the example of the devout woman, he had scarcely finished saying the angelic salutation in the way described and in the same number for six weeks, when behold he began to taſte such sweetness in his mouth and throat from the utterance of this moſt entrancing salutation as to far surpass the sweetness of honey. A monk also of our Order, induced by his example, gained also the same sweetness. This was told me by the anchorite himself. These three examples show plainly that her *name is sweeter than honey and her inheritance than honey and the honey-comb* (Ecclus. xxiv. 20).

Novice.—How fitly is that said: Her inheritance is sweeter than honey and the honey-comb.

Monk.—Repetition is confirmation. What we inherit that we make a practice of using. In the honey-comb is both wax and honey. Wax because it is tenacious refers to the memory; honey expresses the sweetness. Only by the bond of memory can the sweetness of the name of the Mother of God be realised. Further wax gives light, while honey feeds and intoxicates. The name of Mary is *like the composition of the perfume that is made by the art of the apothecary: It is sweet as honey in all mouths, and as music in a bouquet of wine* (Ecclus. xlix. 1). For the invocation of this holy name causes both illumination and refreshment, as has been shown in the above examples.

Novice.—How such benefits are conferred both on the juſt and the unjuſt through the name of the Blessed Virgin will ever dwell in my memory.

Monk.—If indeed this be the case you will not lose her consolations in your laſt hour. Moreover here are examples to show you how she helps the dying and shows to them her honeysweet presence.

CHAPTER L.

Of a monk who was kissed by S. Mary in the hour of death.

In a house of our Order in Spain, called Tumerane, there were two young lay-brethren, and so worthily did they pass their lives there, that their conduct was an example to all others. One of them was so fervent and devout in his worship of the Blessed Virgin, so absorbed and intent in chanting her hours, that not only did he carry to his memory every verse but even every word, and so, even when occupied with severe toil, he almost continuously carried on his worship. After seventeen years of this life he fell grievously sick and the prior gave leave to his companion to attend upon him. Knowing him to be a holy man and most devout in his service of the Mother of God, he besought him to say something for his edification from an impulse of mutual affection. And when the other was unwilling, but yet could not refuse, he replied: "Yesterday Our Lady came to me and foretold that in seven days I should go to be with the Lord." And he added: "Because you have served me more earnestly than all other mortals, I too, will do for you what I have never yet done for anyone. And then she put her arms round my neck and gave me a kiss."

Novice.—Readers might find a difficulty in this because it is said above in the thirty-second chapter that she delivered the knight from temptation by a kiss.

Monk.—This vision was before that other one in time. But when he fell into his agony on the day and at the hour foretold the sleeping prior saw a crowd of the white robed enter the cell in which the blessed brother was lying, and they said that they had come to take away his soul. And immediately he was roused by the stroke of the gong, leapt up from his bed and ran to the cell of the dying man, and never for one moment doubted that this was the celestial host who had come to carry away the devoted servant of the Mother of God. This story was told to many by Dom

Arnold, a Cistercian abbot who lived at Trèves. He said that it had most certainly happened in the monastery where he had formerly been abbot.

CHAPTER LI.

Of the lay-brother Herman, on whose behalf when wearied out S. Mary chanted his office and foretold his death.

In the cloister which is generally called Hemmenrode, there was a certain lay-brother named Herman who was appointed to the ploughing of the woodland of a certain grange. Now he was a man of very stainless life and received in secret from the Lord many comforting revelations, very few of which have come to our knowledge. In his work he had to do with a fierce and high-spirited bull amongst his other oxen which he could scarcely harness to his work without great toil, and sometimes failed altogether. When once he wished to harness this animal and had tried every means in vain, he grew angry and turned aside into the wood, and there cut down a stick to beat the rebellious bull. And when he came towards him, threatening him with the stick, the bull impelled by I know not what instinct, came up to him and prostrated himself at his feet and besought pardon though not in words yet by the attitude of his cringing body. When he saw this the man of God was entirely appeased and said: "You ask for mercy and mercy I will not refuse you. Get up and see that you do not trouble me any more." Now from that day this bull laid aside all his ferocity so far that in gentleness he was found inferior to none of his yoke fellows. At another time this same brother, when worn out with the toil of the day had lain down on his bed after compline to rest, suddenly remembered that he had put off saying one of his hours, owing to pressure of work, and this hour was one

which he was accustomed to chant in honour of the Blessed Virgin and had now, after postponing it, forgotten and omitted it. Whereupon he leapt up from his bed that he might even then fulfil what he had forgotten. But the queen of the universe took pity upon his toil and appeared to him suddenly ordering him to lie still for she herself would say for him the forgotten hour. Now when the Lord God determined to give him the just reward of his toils, He sent upon him a weakness of body but did not withdraw the joy of his soul or the consolation of his spirit. So when he had lain sick for several days, the abbot Gilbert came to visit both him and the other sick brethren, and when he said to him: "Are you not ashamed, brother Herman, that brother Godfrey will be before you in the kingdom of heaven?" pointing to another lay-brother lying in the infirmary, who had scarcely accomplished three years in the Order; he replied: "No Sir, whatever good thing it is God's will to do for him I greatly rejoice for Him." Then said the abbot: "You make a joke of everything." For his face always seemed naturally ready to laugh. "Take my permission to go to church again and to your work." He replied: "I will go withersoever God may will." "Where," said the abbot, "will you go." He replied: "To the kingdom of heaven." "When there" said the other "Will you die?" And he: "In two days. For when mass begins on the third day from this I shall still he here, and when the gospel is begun I shall still be here, but before it is finished I shall be in the kingdom of heaven. And this three days seems to me to be very tedious, and weighs me down more heavily than all the rest of my life that I have lived upon earth." "How" said the abbot, "Do you know this?" The other replied: "Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin, came here and thus consoled me. But also I was snatched up into heaven, where I was even granted to see the glorious place, where I shall dwell by the bounty of God." Then from that day the abbot very frequently visited him, and now the third day had come and when the hour of mass drew near, there came to him brother Theodoric of blessed memory, his attendant, and said: "Brother Herman, may I leave you to go to mass?" For it was Lent. But he said "No, let

the others go, but do you stay with me, and make ready warm water with which I may be washed," and a little while afterwards: "Spread out my mat and call two brothers to help you, for it is time for me to go." Then as the gospel was beginning, the gong was beaten and the convent came hurrying to the infirmary, and the abbot himself among the foremost; and so that holy soul was set free, as he had predicted, before the gospel was finished.

Novice.—I do not wonder that that righteous man longed for death, since the queen of life thus consoled him before his death.

Monk.—Not only does her presence give confidence in death to the sick, but it even stirs laughter in the dying which is a sign of great joy.

CHAPTER LII.

Of the lay-brother Pavo, who at his death saw S. Mary.

A young lay-brother, a Frisian, fell grievously sick in Lucka which I mentioned above. When he was *in extremis,* in the very agony of death, as was told me by a monk, who was present at the time, he began to laugh, and when one of the bystanders said to him: "Pavo," for that was his name, "Why are you laughing?" He replied: "Why, should I not laugh? See, Our Lady is standing by me and is about to take my soul." It seems to me that the verse of the poet was herein fulfilled. *"Do not delay, O new born child, to recognise thy mother with a joyful smile"* (Vulg. Ecl. iv. 60). For this lay-brother was a child in virtue because he was simple-hearted and pure; he was new born because he was humble and gentle. I have no doubt that the Blessed Virgin made motherly signs to the dying man; for a stern contenance would excite fear not laughter.

CHAPTER LIII.

Also of a nun to whom she appeared in death.

A similar thing happened at Cologne in the church of S. Maurice. A certain nun of irreproachable life was brought there into her agony, and the sisters were standing round the dying woman, when she, with tranquil face, smiled and said in the hearing of all: "Welcome be my sweetest Lady, thrice welcome." And so closing again her lips she expired. For she had always dearly loved the Blessed Virgin, and so it came about that in that terrible hour she found grace to see her beloved, and when seen to greet her, and by her aid and with her to enter her heavenly home.

Novice.—I hope that the demons, who are often importunate at the death of even the most holy men, cannot endure the presence of so much majesty.

Monk.—I will show you this by an example.

CHAPTER LIV.

Also of the monk Warner to whose help she came when in extremis and terrified by demons.

About three years ago a monk named Warner died in Eberbach, young indeed in years and beardless, but mentally of a ripe age. His abbot told me that just before the hour of his death, he saw demons surrounding him, and being greatly troubled by their importunity, he cried aloud: "Holy Mary, deliver me from these awful beings," repeating this cry over and over again. When those who stood around him heard this cry of his, they wondered greatly, knowing him to be a silent man, who scarcely gave answers to questions that were asked of him. A little later he breathed freely again, bowed his head and said: "Welcome my dearest Lady, thrice

welcome." Presently he lifted up his hand against the demons, mocked them and added: "Now lie you there, now lie you there." And so after a little while, he expired peacefully, giving joy to the angels in heaven but no little grief to his brethren in the monastery. For he had been a youth of good and well disciplined life, pure both in body and mind. And it is certain that at the coming of the queen of heaven, all that crowd of evil spirits was driven away and cast down, just as a morning cloud is dispersed at the rising of the sun.

Novice.—If our most merciful Lady, by her pity alone has put to silence the grinning of demons at the death of a sinner, as we have already shown in the ninth chapter, I am not surprised that she put to flight their unmerited terrors at the death of this righteous man.

Monk.—You are right; for it is only natural that the Mother of all chastity should reward the virtue of purity in her servant by so gracious a visitation even before his death. Nor do I wonder at this in the case of a perfect monk, when I remember that the Mother of God granted her presence to a dying secular clerk as a reward for this same virtue.

CHAPTER LV.

Also of a canon of Cologne to whom she showed herself at his death.

A certain canon of Cologne cathedral, as he lay on his death bed, saw and recognised the presence of the Blessed Mary. When he told this vision to those who were standing round his bed, he received invisibly an unmistakable blow upon the head.

Novice.—What then was his fault?

Monk.—I think that it was vainglory, which was immediately cured by this same blow. His name was Albert, and

although he was pure in body, he was nevertheless both worldly and dainty, and particular about his clothes. But that you may not doubt that Our Lady visibly bestows her presence upon all chaste persons in dying whether they be cloistered virgins or not, and brings them to everlasting life, I will give you an example of a married layman.

CHAPTER LVI.

Of Kono, a crusader, whom S. Mary comforted in death.

A certain citizen of Zülpich, an honourable man by name Kono, took the cross in the last expedition and came to the coast with other pilgrims. There he fell grievously sick and when he was at the point of death, he began to show himself marvellously happy. When his friends asked him the cause of this happiness, he replied: "Why should I not rejoice? Lo, Our Lady S. Mary is here present and she has said to me: 'Kono, since you have left your wife, your children and all that you have, exposing yourself to danger for the honour of my Son, I will reward you well and fully.'" And then he cried forthwith: "Lo I see heaven opened, and a place prepared for me there, to which I shall quickly ascend." Forthwith he asked to be anointed with the holy oil, and to be strengthened with the viaticum of the Lord's body, and so far from home he died, and as a true pilgrim received the reward of his toil in his heavenly home.

Novice.—I am not surprised if that righteous man, who was indeed still further justified by the taking of the cross saw and deserved so wonderful a vision; but if you know, tell me more wonders.

Monk.—I will give you two examples of divine pity and of that Holy Mother which will not only cause you admiration but will even rightly bewilder you.

CHAPTER LVII.

Of a beheaded knight who by Her help escaped from hell.

A noble but crime-ſtained knight was once captured by his enemies. And because they held him in deadly hatred, it seemed good to them to put him to death without delay. The noble, perceiving that his death was imminent and that no hope of life remained made the following ſupplication to them: "I beſeech you, in the preſence of God that you will deign to put off my death for a little, that I may confeſs my ſins to a prieſt." They replied: "Such a delay would not be ſafe for us. It might happen that your friends and relations would come up and ſnatch you from our hands, and ſo the laſt error would be worſe than the firſt." Then, when they ordered him to lie down that he might be beheaded, he ſaid this: "God, Thou knoweſt my deſire." And he added "I commend my ſoul to the Son of the Virgin." And ſo he was beheaded.

Now there was at that time a certain poſſeſſed man in the neighbourhood; and when ſome ſaid to him after hearing of the death of ſo great a tryant: "You muſt be greatly delighted at gaining the ſoul of that wicked knight"; he replied in a gloomy voice: "Not at all; for as he died he uttered one word by which he won ſalvation." There is no doubt that by the help of the Bleſſed Virgin, to whoſe Son he committed his ſoul at the point of death, he was delivered from the pains of hell and taken like the dying thief to the joys of paradiſe. I will tell you another ſtory which will ſurpriſe you ſtill more, which was told me by an abbot of our Order who ſaid that it happened about five years ago.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Also of a robber whom she caused to be buried in a church, after he had been executed.

In the neighbourhood of the city of Trent, as I heard from a certain abbot, there lived a well-known robber, by whom many had been spoiled, and those who wished to defend themselves and were unable, were simply killed. This man one day met a monk of our Order and hoping that he was carrying money with him, he said: "Unless you follow me willingly, I will kill you." The monk therefore followed him, and on the road asked him who he was and what he wanted with him; the other replied: "I am that notorious robber," and mentioned his name. And when the monk said to him: "Your hair is already beginning to grow white, have you no fears for your soul?" he replied: "No more than an ox," and the monk was silent. But when he came to the robber's cave he said to himself: "If only you could convert this man you would do a great service to God," and he said to the robber: "May I ask you something?" and when the robber replied: "certainly"; the monk went on: "What sort of a life has yours been from the beginning?" he replied: "Vile. When I was a boy, I fought with all my companions; when I became a young man, I turned all my zeal to thieving; and finally when I became a man I practised highway robberies, in which I became so proficient that to-day I am the head and chief of all the robbers of this province."

To this the monk replied: "Have you no fear of the eternal pains, that you are laying up for yourself by deeds of this kind?" And when he said that there was no question about his soul, for that was already lost; the monk answered: "Supposing I could show you a way of salvation, would you listen to me or not?" The bandit said: "Indeed I would gladly take your advice," and the other went on: "Fast one day in the week in honour of S. Mary, the Mother of God, and do no injury to anyone on that day, and I tell you most

certainly that you will find favour with her Son." The robber replied: "In good earneſt will I do this, and now I take upon me this vow; I will eat nothing on that day, I will rob no one, I will do harm to no one."

And he chose the Saturday for the day, working no ill on that day, nay rather, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, delivering very many from the hands of his companions who would have been robbed or slain. Now at that time the city of Trent was surrounded with enemies and one Saturday the city guards made a sally and pursued the enemy, and with the reſt they took prisoner the aforesaid bandit, who was unarmed because it was Saturday. And though he was a very brave man, he did not defend himself when he was taken, he made no excuses for himself, and when he was brought before the judges, he would not speak when queſtioned. He was brought into the city and as soon as he was recognised he was condemned to the gallows. Nevertheless, as it is believed, by the will of the Blessed Virgin, the judges were moved by his beauty, and agreed to this, that he should be banished from the province, and permitted to live. This he declined, and said: "I will not agree, for it is better for me to expiate my sins now than in the future"; whereupon they replied: "Then we muſt have you beheaded." "It makes no difference to me," he said, "of what kind my punishment is, so long as I am put to death." And they said: "Would you like to see a prieſt?" he answered: "It is not necessary. For you are all Chriſtian men, and in the presence of you all I will confess all my sins." And when he had done this with great contrition, he admitted that he had done no good thing, except that faſt, which he had learnt from the monk.

And so he was taken out of the city and beheaded at the place of execution. During that night the guards of the gate saw lights flashing round his tomb; and five matrons dug up his body, fitted the head to the trunk, laid it on a bier, throwing over it a purple pall of marvellous texture. Four of them having each a lighted candle in her hand, carried the bier by the four corners, while the fifth who was the moſt splendid of all, followed with a candle till they came to the

gate, where they laid the body down. When the guards saw these things they were terrified, supposing it to be a vision. And that lady said to them: "Go and tell your bishop to bury honourably in a certain spot in the cathedral this chaplain of mine, whom you have beheaded," and she added threats if he should disobey; and then she revealed her name.

In the morning, when this message was brought to the bishop, he came out with a great concourse of clergy and people, and when he laid aside the pall, and saw that the severed head was united again to the body, he was stupefied, and wondering at the texture of the pall, which surpassed all human skill, he believed all that he had heard, and in fear and with the highest honours he buried him in the appointed place, not as a bandit, but as a Christian martyr. From that time to this day scarcely an adult has been found in that province who does not follow his example and fast on Saturday in honour of Our Lady.

Novice.—Since good works done without charity are dead, how could a fast or any other kind of good work, wrought while he was still a bandit, be pleasing to the Mother of God.

Monk.—By the worship which he paid to the Blessed Virgin, he rendered himself capable of receiving grace; by his final contrition he became a son of glory; by the temporal punishment, which he bore willingly and patiently, he escaped the pains of purgatory. For God does not punish twice for the same fault, unless the healing medicine be despised. I do not dare to explain it otherwise. For we read in Vitas-patrum of a certain converted bandit to whom when he was recounting the works of mercy which he had performed in his life as a bandit the holy Pafnutuis replied: "Never in my life have I done such a thing, i.e. so great a deed."

Novice.—This wonderful story ought greatly to kindle sinners with love for the Holy Mother of God.

Monk.—There is still one chapter left, which more than all that you have heard so far, ought to kindle all the adherents of our Order with love for her. I have kept this for the end of the present book because that which is told last, is more strongly impressed upon the memory.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Of a monk who saw in the kingdom of heaven the Cistercian Order beneath Our Lady's cloak.

A certain monk of our Order, who was a great devotee of Our Lady, a few years ago fell into an ecstasy and was taken to view the glories of heaven. Now there he saw the different ranks of the church triumphant, to wit, angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all of them divided into their particular Orders, i.e. canons, regulars, premonstratensians, or Cluniacs, and being troubled about his own Order, he stood there and looked around and could find in that glory no single person of his Order, and therefore turning with a groan to the Blessed Mother of God, he said: "Oh! most Holy Lady, why is it that I see no one here of the Cistercian Order? Why are your servants, who serve you so devotedly, shut out from sharing in so great happiness?"

Whereupon, the queen of heaven, seeing him greatly troubled, replied: "Those of the Cistercian Order are so dear to me, and so beloved, that I cherish them in my bosom."

And opening her cloak, with which she seemed to be clothed, and which was of marvellous amplitude, she showed him an innumerable multitude of monks, lay-brothers, and nuns. Then he, greatly exulting, and giving heartfelt thanks to her, returned to his body, and told his abbot what he had seen and heard. He indeed, at the following chapter, reported this to the other abbots, and bringing great joy to them all kindled them with still greater love for the Holy Mother of God.

Now because I have no wit to praise duly this Blessed Virgin, who is indeed the mirror of purity, and whose merits and glory exceed the loftiest flights of all other saints, like an unskilled orator, I belittle her, by trying to praise her; and therefore, helped by your prayers, I beseech of her to supply my deficiencies, and make fruitful all that I have written, or am about to write. Amen.

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Caesarius

AUTHOR

The dialogue on miracles.

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